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"Unto This Last"

Four Essays

ON THE

First Principles of Political Economy

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

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"FRIEND, I DO THEE NO WRONG. DID'ST NOT THOU AGREE WITH ME FOR A PENNY? TAKE THAT THINE IS. AND GO THY WAY. I WILL GIVE UNTO THIS LAST EVEN AS UNTO THEE."

"IF YE THINK GOOD, GIVE ME MY PRICE, AND IF NOT, FORBEAR. SO THEY WEIGHED FOR MY PRICE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER."

22947

PREFACE.

THE four following essays were published eighteen months ago in the *Cornhill Magazine*, and were reprobated in a violent manner, as far as I could hear, by most of the readers they met with.

Not a whit the less, I believe them to be the best, that is to say, the truest, rightest-worded, and most serviceable things I have ever written; and the last of them, having had especial pains spent on it, is probably the best I shall ever write.

"This," the reader may reply, "it might be, yet not therefore well written." Which, in no mock humility, admitting, I yet rest satisfied with the work, though with nothing else that I have done; and purposing shortly to follow out the subjects opened in these papers, as I may find leisure, I wish the introductory statements to be within the reach of any one who may care to refer to them. So I republish the essays as they appeared. One word only is changed, correcting the estimate of a weight; and no word is added.

Although, however, I find nothing to modify in these

papers, it is matter of regret to me that the most startling of all the statements in them,—that respecting the necessity of the organization of labour, with fixed wages,—should have found its way into the first essay; it being quite one of the least important, though by no means the least certain, of the positions to be defended. The real gist of these papers, their central meaning and aim, is to give, as I believe for the first time in plain English,—it has often been incidentally given in good Greek by Plato and Xenophon, and good Latin by Cicero and Horace,—a logical definition of WEALTH: such definition being absolutely needed for a basis of economical science. The most reputed essay on that subject which has appeared in modern times, after opening with the statement that "writers on political economy profess to teach, or to investigate,* the nature of wealth," thus follows up the declaration of its thesis—"Every one has a notion, sufficiently correct for common purposes, of what is meant by wealth." . . . "It is no part of the design of this treatise to aim at metaphysical nicety of definition.†"

Metaphysical nicety, we assuredly do not need; but physical nicety, and logical accuracy, with respect to a physical subject, we as assuredly do.

* Which? for where investigation is necessary, teaching is impossible.

† *Principles of Political Economy.* By J. S. Mill. Preliminary remarks, p. 2.

Suppose the subject of inquiry, instead of being House law (*Oikonomia*), had been Star-law (*Astronomia*), and that, ignoring distinction between stars fixed and wandering, as here between wealth radiant and wealth reflective, the writer had begun thus: "Every one has a notion, sufficiently correct for common purposes, of what is meant by stars. Metaphysical nicety in the definition of a star is not the object of this treatise;"—the essay so opened might yet have been far more true in its final statements, and a thousand-fold more serviceable to the navigator, than any treatise on wealth, which founds its conclusions on the popular conception of wealth, can ever become to the economist.

It was, therefore, the first object of these following papers to give an accurate and stable definition of wealth. Their second object was to show that the acquisition of wealth was finally possible only under certain moral conditions of society, of which quite the first was a belief in the existence and even, for practical purposes, in the attainability of honesty.

Without venturing to pronounce—since on such a matter human judgment is by no means conclusive—what is, or is not, the noblest of God's works, we may yet admit so much of Pope's assertion as that an honest man is among His best works presently visible, and, as things stand, a somewhat rare one; but not an incredible or miraculous

work; still less an abnormal one. Honesty is not a disturbing force, which deranges the orbits of economy; but a consistent and commanding force, by obedience to which —and by no other obedience—those orbits can continue clear of chaos.

It is true, I have sometimes heard Pope condemned for the lowness, instead of the height, of his standard:—"Honesty is indeed a respectable virtue; but how much higher may men attain! Shall nothing more be asked of us than that we be honest?"

For the present, good friends, nothing. It seems that in our aspirations to be more than that, we have to some extent lost sight of the propriety of being so much as that. What else we may have lost faith in, there shall be here no question; but assuredly we have lost faith in common honesty, and in the working power of it. And this faith, with the facts on which it may rest, it is quite our first business to recover and keep: not only believing, but even by experience assuring ourselves, that there are yet in the world men who can be restrained from fraud otherwise than by the fear of losing employment;* nay, that it is even accurately in proportion to the number of such men in any State, that the said State does or can prolong its existence.

* "The effectual discipline which is exercised over a workman is not that of his corporation, but of his customers. It is the fear of losing their employment which restrains his frauds, and corrects his negligence." (*Wealth of Nations*, Book I. chap. 10.)

To these two points, then, the following essays are mainly directed. The subject of the organization of labour is only casually touched upon; because, if we once can get a sufficient quantity of honesty in our captains, the organization of labour is easy, and will develop itself without quarrel or difficulty; but if we cannot get honesty in our captains, the organization of labour is for evermore impossible.

The several conditions of its possibility I purpose to examine at length in the sequel. Yet, lest the reader should be alarmed by the hints thrown out during the following investigation of first principles, as if they were leading him into unexpectedly dangerous ground, I will, for his better assurance, state at once the worst of the political creed at which I wish him to arrive.

1. First,—that there should be training schools for youth established, at Government cost,* and under Government discipline, over the whole country; that every child born in the country should, at the parent's wish, be permitted (and, in certain cases, be under penalty required) to pass

* It will probably be inquired by near-sighted persons, out of what funds such schools could be supported. The expedient modes of direct provision for them I will examine hereafter; indirectly, they would be far more than self-supporting. The economy in crime alone, (quite one of the most costly articles of luxury in the modern European market,) which such schools would induce, would suffice to support them ten times over. Their economy of labour would be pure gain, and that too large to be presently calculable.

through them; and that, in these schools, the child should (with other minor pieces of knowledge hereafter to be considered) imperatively be taught, with the best skill of teaching that the country could produce, the following three things:—

(*a*) the laws of health, and the exercises enjoined by them;

(*b*) habits of gentleness and justice; and

(*c*) the calling by which he is to live.

2. Secondly,—that, in connection with these training schools, there should be established, also entirely under Government regulation, manufactories and workshops, for the production and sale of every necessary of life, and for the exercise of every useful art. And that, interfering no whit with private enterprise, nor setting any restraints or tax on private trade, but leaving both to do their best, and beat the Government if they could,—there should, at these Government manufactories and shops, be authoritatively good and exemplary work done, and pure and true substance sold; so that a man could be sure, if he chose to pay the Government price, that he got for his money bread that was bread, ale that was ale, and work that was work.

3. Thirdly,—that any man, or woman, or boy, or girl, out of employment, should be at once received at the nearest Government school, and set to such work as it appeared on trial, they were fit for, at a fixed rate of wages deter-

minable every year:—that, being found incapable of work through ignorance, they should be taught, or being found incapable of work through sickness, should be tended; but that being found objecting to work, they should be set, under compulsion of the strictest nature, to the more painful and degrading forms of necessary toil, especially to that in mines and other places of danger (such danger being, however, diminished to the utmost by careful regulation and discipline) and the due wages of such work be retained—cost of compulsion first abstracted—to be at the workman's command, so soon as he has come to sounder mind respecting the laws of employment.

4. Lastly,—that for the old and destitute, comfort and home should be provided; which provision, when misfortune had been by the working of such a system sifted from guilt, would be honourable instead of disgraceful to the receiver. For (I repeat this passage out of my *Political Economy of Art*, to which the reader is referred for farther detail *) "a labourer serves his country with his spade, just as a man in the middle ranks of life serves it with sword, pen, or lancet. If the service be less, and, therefore, the wages during health less, then the reward when health is broken may be less, but not less honourable; and it ought to be as natural and straightforward a matter for a labourer to receive his pension from his parish, because he has deserved well of his parish, as for a man in higher rank

* Addenda, p. 102.

to take his pension from his country, because he has deserved well of his country."

To which statement, I will only add, for conclusion, respecting the discipline and pay of life and death, that, for both high and low, Livy's last words touching Valerius Publicola, "*de publico est elatus*," * ought not to be a dishonourable close of epitaph.

These things, then, I believe, and am about, as I find power, to explain and illustrate in their various bearings; following out also what belongs to them of collateral inquiry. Here I state them only in brief, to prevent the reader casting about in alarm for my ultimate meaning; yet requesting him, for the present, to remember, that in a science dealing with so subtle elements as those of human nature, it is only possible to answer for the final truth of principles, not for the direct success of plans: and that in the best of these last, what can be immediately accomplished is always questionable, and what can be finally accomplished, inconceivable.

* "P. Valerius, omnium consensu princeps belli pacisque artibus, anno post moritur; gloriâ ingenti, copiis familiaribus adeo exiguis, ut funeri sumtus deesset: de publico est elatus. Luxêre matronæ ut Brutum."—Lib. II. c. xvi.

Denmark Hill, 10*th May*, 1862.

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"UNTO THIS LAST."

ESSAY I.

THE ROOTS OF HONOUR.

Among the delusions which at different periods have possessed themselves of the minds of large masses of the human race, perhaps the most curious—certainly the least creditable—is the modern *soi-disant* science of political economy, based on the idea that an advantageous code of social action may be determined irrespectively of the influence of social affection.

Of course, as in the instances of alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, and other such popular creeds, political economy has a plausible idea at the root of it. "The social affections," says the economist, "are accidental and disturbing elements in human nature; but avarice and the desire of progress are constant elements. Let us eliminate the inconstants, and, considering the human being merely as a covetous machine, examine by what laws of labour, purchase, and sale, the greatest accumulative result in wealth is attainable. Those

laws once determined, it will be for each individual afterwards to introduce as much of the disturbing affectionate element as he chooses, and to determine for himself the result on the new conditions supposed."

2. This would be a perfectly logical and successful method of analysis, if the accidentals afterwards to be introduced were of the same nature as the powers first examined. Supposing a body in motion to be influenced by constant and inconstant forces, it is usually the simplest way of examining its course to trace it first under the persistent conditions, and afterwards introduce the causes of variation. But the disturbing elements in the social problem are not of the same nature as the constant ones; they alter the essence of the creature under examination the moment they are added; they operate, not mathematically, but chemically, introducing conditions which render all our previous knowledge unavailable. We made learned experiments upon pure nitrogen, and have convinced ourselves that it is a very manageable gas: but behold! the thing which we have practically to deal with is its chloride; and this, the moment we touch it on our established principles, sends us and our apparatus through the ceiling.

3. Observe, I neither impugn nor doubt the conclusions of the science, if its terms are accepted. I am simply uninterested in them, as I should be in those of a science of

gymnastics which assumed that men had no skeletons. It might be shown, on that supposition, that it would be advantageous to roll the students up into pellets, flatten them into cakes, or stretch them into cables; and that when these results were effected, the re-insertion of the skeleton would be attended with various inconveniences to their constitution. The reasoning might be admirable, the conclusions true, and the science deficient only in applicability. Modern political economy stands on a precisely similar basis. Assuming, not that the human being has no skeleton, but that it is all skeleton, it founds an ossifiant theory of progress on this negation of a soul; and having shown the utmost that may be made of bones, and constructed a number of interesting geometrical figures with death's-heads and humeri, successfully proves the inconvenience of the reappearance of a soul among these corpuscular structures. I do not deny the truth of this theory: I simply deny its applicability to the present phase of the world.

This inapplicability has been curiously manifested during the embarrassment caused by the late strikes of our workmen. Here occurs one of the simplest cases, in a pertinent and positive form, of the first vital problem which political economy has to deal with (the relation between employer and employed); and at a severe crisis, when

lives in multitudes, and wealth in masses, are at stake, the political economists are helpless—practically mute; no demonstrable solution of the difficulty can be given by them, such as may convince or calm the opposing parties. Obstinately the masters take one view of the matter; obstinately the operatives another; and no political science can set them at one.

It would be strange if it could, it being not by "science" of any kind that men were ever intended to be set at one. Disputant after disputant vainly strives to show that the interests of the masters are, or are not, antagonistic to those of the men: none of the pleaders ever seeming to remember that it does not absolutely or always follow that the persons must be antagonistic because their interests are. If there is only a crust of bread in the house, and mother and children are starving, their interests are not the same. If the mother eats it, the children want it; if the children eat it, the mother must go hungry to her work. Yet it does not necessarily follow that there will be "antagonism" between them, that they will fight for the crust, and that the mother, being strongest, will get it, and eat it. Neither, in any other case, whatever the relations of the persons may be, can it be assumed for certain that, because their interests are diverse, they must necessarily regard each other with hostility, and use violence or cunning to obtain the advantage.

Even if this were so, and it were as just as it is convenient to consider men as actuated by no other moral influences than those which affect rats or swine, the logical conditions of the question are still indeterminable. It can never be shown generally either that the interests of master and labourer are alike, or that they are opposed; for, according to circumstances, they may be either. It is, indeed, always the interest of both that the work should be rightly done, and a just price obtained for it; but, in the division of profits, the gain of the one may or may not be the loss of the other. It is not the master's interest to pay wages so low as to leave the men sickly and depressed, nor the workman's interest to be paid high wages if the smallness of the master's profit hinders him from enlarging his business, or conducting it in a safe and liberal way. A stoker ought not to desire high pay if the company is too poor to keep the engine-wheels in repair.

And the varieties of circumstances which influence these reciprocal interests are so endless, that all endeavour to deduce rules of action from balance of expediency is in vain. And it is meant to be in vain. For no human actions ever were intended by the Maker of men to be guided by balances of expediency, but by balances of justice. He has therefore rendered all endeavours to determine expediency futile for evermore. No man ever knew, or can know, what will be

the ultimate result to himself, or to others, of any given line of conduct. But every man may know, and most of us do know, what is a just and unjust act. And all of us may know also, that the consequences of justice will be ultimately th best possible, both to others and ourselves, though we can neither say what *is* best, nor how it is likely to come to pass.

I have said balances of justice, meaning, in the term justice, to include affection,—such affection as one man *owes* to another. All right relations between master and operative, and all their best interests, ultimately depend on these.

We shall find the best and simplest illustration of the relations of master and operative in the position of domestic servants.

We will suppose that the master of a household desires only to get as much work out of his servants as he can, at the rate of wages he gives. He never allows them to be idle; feeds them as poorly and lodges them as ill as they will endure, and in all things pushes his requirements to the exact point beyond which he cannot go without forcing the servant to leave him. In doing this, there is no violation on his part of what is commonly called "justice." He agrees with the domestic for his whole time and service, and takes them; the limits of hardship in treatment being fixed by the practice of other masters in his neighbourhood; that is to say, by the current rate of wages for domestic labour. If the

servant can get a better place, he is free to take one, and the master can only tell what is the real market value of his labour, by requiring as much as he will give.

This is the politico-economical view of the case, according to the doctors of that science; who assert that by this procedure the greatest average of work will be obtained from the servant, and therefore, the greatest benefit to the community, and through the community, by reversion, to the servant himself.

That, however, is not so. It would be so if the servant were an engine of which the motive power was steam, magnetism, gravitation, or any other agent of calculable force. But he being, on the contrary, an engine whose motive power is a Soul, the force of this very peculiar agent, as an unknown quantity, enters into all the political economist's equations, without his knowledge, and falsifies every one of their results. The largest quantity of work will not be done by this curious engine for pay, or under pressure, or by help of any kind of fuel which may be applied by the chaldron. It will be done only when the motive force, that is to say, the will or spirit of the creature, is brought to its greatest strength by its own proper fuel; namely, by the affections.

It may indeed happen, and does happen often, that if the master is a man of sense and energy, a large quantity of material work may be done under mechanical pressure,

enforced by strong will and guided by wise method; also it may happen, and does happen often, that if the master is indolent and weak (however good-natured), a very small quantity of work, and that bad, may be produced by the servant's undirected strength, and contemptuous gratitude But the universal law of the matter is that, assuming any given quantity of energy and sense in master and servant, the greatest material result obtainable by them will be, not through antagonism to each other, but through affection for each other; and that if the master, instead of endeavouring to get as much work as possible from the servant, seeks rather to render his appointed and necessary work beneficial to him, and to forward his interests in all just and wholesome ways, the real amount of work ultimately done, or of good rendered, by the person so cared for, will indeed be the greatest possible.

Observe, I say, "of good rendered," for a servant's work is not necessarily or always the best thing he can give his master. But good of all kinds, whether in material service, in protective watchfulness of his master's interest and credit, or in joyful readiness to seize unexpected and irregular occasions of help.

Nor is this one whit less generally true because indulgence will be frequently abused, and kindness met with ingratitude For the servant who, gently treated, is ungrateful, treated

angently, will be revengeful; and the man who is dishonest to a liberal master will be injurious to an unjust one.

In any case, and with any person, this unselfish treatmen will produce the most effective return. Observe, I am here considering the affections wholly as a motive power; not at all as things in themselves desirable or noble, or in any other way abstractedly good. I look at them simply as an anomalous force, rendering every one of the ordinary political economist's calculations nugatory; while, even if he desired to introduce this new element into his estimates, he has no power of dealing with it; for the affections only become a true motive power when they ignore every other motive and condition of political economy. Treat the servant kindly, with the idea of turning his gratitude to account, and you will get, as you deserve, no gratitude, nor any value for your kindness; but treat him kindly without any economical purpose, and all economical purposes will be answered; in this, as in all other matters, whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whoso loses it shall find it.*

* The difference between the two modes of treatment, and between their effective material results, may be seen very accurately by a comparison of the relations of Esther and Charlie in *Bleak House*, with those of Miss Brass and the Marchioness in *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

The essential value and truth of Dickens's writings have been unwisely lost sight of by many thoughtful persons merely because he presents his

The next clearest and simplest example of relation between master and operative is that which exists between the commander of a regiment and his men.

Supposing the officer only desires to apply the rules of discipline so as, with least trouble to himself, to make the regiment most effective, he will not be able, by any rules, or administration of rules, on this selfish principle, to develop

...ten with some colour of caricature. Unwisely, because Dickens's caricature, though often gross, is never mistaken. Allowing for his manner of telling them, the things he tells us are always true. I wish that he could think it right to limit his brilliant exaggeration to works written only for public amusement; and when he takes up a subject of high national importance, such as that which he handled in *Hard Times*, that he would use severer and more accurate analysis. The usefulness of that work (to my mind, in several respects, the greatest he has written) is with many persons seriously diminished because Mr. Bounderby is a dramatic monster, instead of a characteristic example of a worldly master; and Stephen Blackpool a dramatic perfection, instead of a characteristic example of an honest workman. But let us not lose the use of Dickens's wit and insight, because he chooses to speak in a circle of stage fire. He is entirely right in his main drift and purpose in every book he has written; and all of them, but especially *Hard Times*, should be studied with close and earnest care by persons interested in social questions. They will find much that is partial, and, because partial, apparently unjust; but if they examine all the evidence on the other side, which Dickens seems to overlook, it will appear, after all their trouble, that his view was the finally right one, grossly and sharply told.

the full strength of his subordinates. If a man of sense and firmness, he may, as in the former instance, produce a better result than would be obtained by the irregular kindness of a weak officer; but let the sense and firmness be the same in both cases, and assuredly the officer who has the most direct personal relations with his men, the most care for their interests, and the most value for their lives, will develop their effective strength, through their affection for his own person, and trust in his character, to a degree wholly unattainable by other means. The law applies still more stringently as the numbers concerned are larger; a charge may often be successful, though the men dislike their officers; a battle has rarely been won, unless they loved their general.

Passing from these simple examples to the more complicated relations existing between a manufacturer and his workmen, we are met first by certain curious difficulties, resulting, apparently, from a harder and colder state of moral elements. It is easy to imagine an enthusiastic affection existing among soldiers for the colonel. Not so easy to imagine an enthusiastic affection among cotton-spinners for the proprietor of the mill. A body of men associated for purposes of robbery (as a Highland clan in ancient times) shall be animated by perfect affection, and every member of it be ready to lay down his life for the life of his chief. But a band of men associated for purposes of legal production and accumulation is usually animated, it

appears, by no such emotions, and none of them are in anywise willing to give his life for the life of his chief. Not only are we met by this apparent anomaly, in moral matters, but by others connected with it, in administration of system. For a servant or a soldier is engaged at a definite rate of wages, for a definite period; but a workman at a rate of wages variable according to the demand for labour, and with the risk of being at any time thrown out of his situation by chances of trade. Now, as, under these contingencies, no action of the affections can take place, but only an explosive action of *dis*affections, two points offer themselves for consideration in the matter.

The first—How far the rate of wages may be so regulated as not to vary with the demand for labour.

The second—How far it is possible that bodies of workmen may be engaged and maintained at such fixed rate of wages (whatever the state of trade may be), without enlarging or diminishing their number, so as to give them permanent interest in the establishment with which they are connected, like that of the domestic servants in an old family, or an *esprit de corps*, like that of the soldiers in a crack regiment.

13 The first question is, I say, how far it may be possible to fix the rate of wages irrespectively of the demand for labour.

Perhaps one of the most curious facts in the history of human error is the denial by the common political economist of the possibility of thus regulating wages; while for all the important, and much of the unimportant, labour on the earth, wages are already so regulated.

We do not sell our prime-ministership by Dutch auction; nor, on the decease of a bishop, whatever may be the general advantages of simony, do we (yet) offer his diocese to the clergyman who will take the episcopacy at the lowest contract. We (with exquisite sagacity of political economy!) do indeed sell commissions, but not openly, generalships: sick, we do not inquire for a physician who takes less than a guinea; litigious, we never think of reducing six-and-eightpence to four-and-sixpence; caught in a shower, we do not canvass the cabmen, to find one who values his driving at less than sixpence a mile.

It is true that in all these cases there is, and in every conceivable case there must be, ultimate reference to the presumed difficulty of the work, or number of candidates for the office. If it were thought that the labour necessary to make a good physician would be gone through by a sufficient number of students with the prospect of only half-guinea fees, public consent would soon withdraw the unnecessary half-guinea. In this ultimate sense, the price of labour is indeed always regulated by the demand for it

but so far as the practical and immediate administrat of the matter is regarded, the best labour always has bec and is, as *all* labour ought to be, paid by an invariabl standard.

"What!" the reader, perhaps, answers amazedly: "pay good and bad workmen alike?"

Certainly. The difference between one prelate's sermons and his successor's,—or between one physician's opinion and another's—is far greater, as respects the qualities of mind involved, and far more important in result to you personally, than the difference between good and bad laying of bricks (though that is greater than most people suppose). Yet you pay with equal fee, contentedly, the good and bad workmen upon your soul, and the good and bad workmen upon your body; much more may you pay, contentedly, with equal fees, the good and bad workmen upon your house.

"Nay, but I choose my physician and (?) my clergyman, thus indicating my sense of the quality of their work." By all means, also, choose your bricklayer; that is the proper reward of the good workman, to be "chosen." The natural and right system respecting all labour is, that it should be paid at a fixed rate, but the good workman employed, and the bad workman unemployed. The false, unnatural, and destructive system is when the bad work

man is allowed to offer his work at half-price, and either take the place of the good, or force him by his competition to work for an inadequate sum.

This equality of wages, then, being the first object towards which we have to discover the directest available road; the second is, as above stated, that of maintaining constant numbers of workmen in employment, whatever may be the accidental demand for the article they produce.

I believe the sudden and extensive inequalities of demand which necessarily arise in the mercantile operations of an active nation, constitute the only essential difficulty which has to be overcome in a just organization of labour. The subject opens into too many branches to admit of being investigated in a paper of this kind; but the following general facts bearing on it may be noted.

The wages which enable any workman to live are necessarily higher, if his work is liable to intermission, than if it is assured and continuous; and however severe the struggle for work may become, the general law will always hold, that men must get more daily pay if, on the average, they can only calculate on work three days a week, than they would require if they were sure of work six days a week. Supposing that a man cannot live on less than a shilling a day, his seven shillings he must get, either for three days' violent work, or six days' deliberate work. The tendency of all

modern mercantile operations is to throw both wages and trade into the form of a lottery, and to make the workman's pay depend on intermittent exertion, and the principal's profit on dexterously used chance.

In what partial degree, I repeat, this may be necessary in consequence of the activities of modern trade, I do not here investigate; contenting myself with the fact, that in its fatallest aspects it is assuredly unnecessary, and results merely from love of gambling on the part of the masters, and from ignorance and sensuality in the men. The masters cannot bear to let any opportunity of gain escape them, and frantically rush at every gap and breach in the walls of Fortune, raging to be rich, and affronting, with impatient covetousness, every risk of ruin; while the men prefer three days of violent labour, and three days of drunkenness, to six days of moderate work and wise rest. There is no way in which a principal, who really desires to help his workmen, may do it more effectually than by checking these disorderly habits both in himself and them; keeping his own business operations on a scale which will enable him to pursue them securely, not yielding to temptations of precarious gain; and, at the same time, leading his workmen into regular habits of labour and life, either by inducing them rather to take low wages in the form of a fixed salary, than high wages subject to the chance of their being thrown out of work; or

if this be impossible, by discouraging the system of violent exertion for nominally high day wages, and leading the men to take lower pay for more regular labour.

In effecting any radical changes of this kind, doubtless there would be great inconvenience and loss incurred by all the originators of movement. That which can be done with perfect convenience and without loss, is not always the thing that most needs to be done, or which we are most imperatively required to do.

17 I have already alluded to the difference hitherto existing between regiments of men associated for purposes of violence, and for purposes of manufacture; in that the former appear capable of self-sacrifice—the latter, not; which singular fact is the real reason of the general lowness of estimate in which the profession of commerce is held, as compared with that of arms. Philosophically, it does not, at first sight, appear reasonable (many writers have endeavoured to prove it unreasonable) that a peaceable and rational person, whose trade is buying and selling, should be held in less honour than an unpeaceable and often irrational person, whose trade is slaying. Nevertheless, the consent of mankind has always, in spite of the philosophers, given precedence to the soldier.

And this is right.

For the soldier's trade, verily and essentially, is not slaying, but being slain. This, without well knowing its own

meaning, the world honours it for. A bravo's trade is slaying; but the world has never respected bravos more than merchants: the reason it honours the soldier is, because he holds his life at the service of the State. Reckless he may be —fond of pleasure or of adventure—all kinds of bye-motives and mean impulses may have determined the choice of his profession, and may affect (to all appearance exclusively) his daily conduct in it; but our estimate of him is based on this ultimate fact—of which we are well assured—that, put him in a fortress breach, with all the pleasures of the world behind him, and only death and his duty in front of him, he will keep his face to the front; and he knows that this choice may be put to him at any moment, and has beforehand taken his part—virtually takes such part continually—does, in reality, die daily.

18 Not less is the respect we pay to the lawyer and physician, founded ultimately on their self-sacrifice. Whatever the learning or acuteness of a great lawyer, our chief respect for him depends on our belief that, set in a judge's seat, he will strive to judge justly, come of it what may. Could we suppose that he would take bribes, and use his acuteness and legal knowledge to give plausibility to iniquitous decisions, no degree of intellect would win for him our respect. Nothing will win it, short of our tacit conviction, that in all important acts of his life justice is first with him; his own interest, second.

In the case of a physician, the ground of the honour we render him is clearer still. Whatever his science, we should shrink from him in horror if we found him regard his patients merely as subjects to experiment upon; much more, if we found that, receiving bribes from persons interested in their deaths, he was using his best skill to give poison in the mask of medicine.

Finally, the principle holds with utmost clearness as it respects clergymen. No goodness of disposition will excuse want of science in a physician or of shrewdness in an advocate; but a clergyman, even though his power of intellect be small, is respected on the presumed ground of his unselfishness and serviceableness.

19 Now there can be no question but that the tact, foresight, decision, and other mental powers, required for the successful management of a large mercantile concern, if not such as could be compared with those of a great lawyer, general, or divine, would at least match the general conditions of mind required in the subordinate officers of a ship, or of a regiment, or in the curate of a country parish. If, therefore, all the efficient members of the so-called liberal professions are still, somehow, in public estimate of honour, preferred before the head of a commercial firm, the reason must lie deeper than in the measurement of their several powers of mind.

And the essential reason for such preference will be found

to lie in the fact that the merchant is presumed to act always selfishly. His work may be very necessary to the community; but the motive of it is understood to be wholly personal. The merchant's first object in all his dealings must be (the public believe) to get as much for himself, and leave as little to his neighbour (or customer) as possible. Enforcing this upon him, by political statute, as the necessary principle of his action; recommending it to him on all occasions, and themselves reciprocally adopting it; proclaiming vociferously, for law of the universe, that a buyer's function is to cheapen, and a seller's to cheat,—the public, nevertheless, involuntarily condemn the man of commerce for his compliance with their own statement, and stamp him for ever as belonging to an inferior grade of human personality.

20 This they will find, eventually, they must give up doing. They must not cease to condemn selfishness; but they will have to discover a kind of commerce which is not exclusively selfish. Or, rather, they will have to discover that there never was, or can be, any other kind of commerce; that this which they have called commerce was not commerce at all, but cozening; and that a true merchant differs as much from a merchant according to laws of modern political economy, as the hero of the *Excursion* from Autolycus. They will find that commerce is an occupation which gentlemen will every day see more need to engage in, rather than in the

businesses of talking to men, or slaying them; that, in true commerce, as in true preaching, or true fighting, it is necessary to admit the idea of occasional voluntary loss;—that sixpences have to be lost, as well as lives, under a sense of duty; that the market may have its martyrdoms as well as the pulpit; and trade its heroisms, as well as war.

May have—in the final issue, must have—and only has not had yet, because men of heroic temper have always been misguided in their youth into other fields, not recognizing what is in our days, perhaps, the most important of all fields; so that, while many a zealous person loses his life in trying to teach the form of a gospel, very few will lose a hundred pounds in showing the practice of one.

The fact is, that people never have had clearly explained to them the true functions of a merchant with respect to other people. I should like the reader to be very clear about this.

Five great intellectual professions, relating to daily necessities of life, have hitherto existed—three exist necessarily, in every civilized nation:

The Soldier's profession is to *defend* it.

The Pastor's, to *teach* it.

The Physician's, to *keep it in health.*

The Lawyer's, to *enforce justice* in it.

The Merchant's, to *provide* for it.

And the duty of all these men is, on due occasion, to *die* for it.

"On due occasion," namely :—

The Soldier, rather than leave his post in battle.

The Physician, rather than leave his post in plague.

The Pastor, rather than teach Falsehood.

The Lawyer, rather than countenance Injustice.

The Merchant—What is *his* "due occasion" of death?

It is the main question for the merchant, as for all of us. For, truly, the man who does not know when to die, does not know how to live.

Observe, the merchant's function (or manufacturer's, for in the broad sense in which it is here used the word must be understood to include both) is to provide for the nation. It is no more his function to get profit for himself out of that provision than it is a clergyman's function to get his stipend. The stipend is a due and necessary adjunct, but not the object, of his life, if he be a true clergyman, any more than his fee (or *honorarium*) is the object of life to a true physician. Neither is his fee the object of life to a true merchant. All three, if true men, have a work to be don irrespective of fee—to be done even at any cost, or for quite the contrary of fee; the pastor's function being to teach, the physician's to heal, and the merchant's, as I have said, to provide. That is to say, he has to understand to their very

root the qualities of the thing he deals in, and the means of obtaining or producing it; and he has to apply all his sagacity and energy to the producing or obtaining it in perfect state, and distributing it at the cheapest possible price where it is most needed.

And because the production or obtaining of any commodity involves necessarily the agency of many lives and hands, the merchant becomes in the course of his business the master and governor of large masses of men in a more direct, though less confessed way, than a military officer or pastor; so that on him falls, in great part, the responsibility for the kind of life they lead: and it becomes his duty, not only to be always considering how to produce what he sells in the purest and cheapest forms, but how to make the various employments involved in the production, or transference of it, most beneficial to the men employed.

And as into these two functions, requiring for their right exercise the highest intelligence, as well as patience, kindness, and tact, the merchant is bound to put all his energy, so for their just discharge he is bound, as soldier or physician is bound, to give up, if need be, his life, in such way as may be demanded of him. Two main points he has in his providing function to maintain: first, his engagements (faithfulness to engagements being the real root of all possibilities in commerce); and, secondly, the perfectness and purity of the

thing provided; so that, rather than fail in any engagement or consent to any deterioration, adulteration, or unjust and exorbitant price of that which he provides, he is bound to meet fearlessly any form of distress, poverty, or labour, which may, through maintenance of these points, come upon him.

Again: in his office as governor of the men employed by him, the merchant or manufacturer is invested with a distinctly paternal authority and responsibility. In most cases, a youth entering a commercial establishment is withdrawn altogether from home influence; his master must become his father, else he has, for practical and constant help, no father at hand: in all cases the master's authority, together with the general tone and atmosphere of his business, and the character of the men with whom the youth is compelled in the course of it to associate, have more immediate and pressing weight than the home influence, and will usually neutralize it either for good or evil; so that the only means which the master has of doing justice to the men employed by him is to ask himself sternly whether he is dealing with such subordinate as he would with his own son, if compelled by circumstances to take such a position.

Supposing the captain of a frigate saw it right, or were by any chance obliged, to place his own son in the position of a common sailor; as he would then treat his son, he is bound always to treat every one of the men under him

So, also, supposing the master of a manufactory saw it right, or were by any chance obliged, to place his own son in the position of an ordinary workman; as he would then treat his son, he is bound always to treat every one of his men. This is the only effective, true, or practical RULE which can be given on this point of political economy.

And as the captain of a ship is bound to be the last man to leave his ship in case of wreck, and to share his last crust with the sailors in case of famine, so the manufacturer, in any commercial crisis or distress, is bound to take the suffering of it with his men, and even to take more of it for himself than he allows his men to feel; as a father would in a famine, shipwreck, or battle, sacrifice himself for his son.

All which sounds very strange; the only real strangeness in the matter being, nevertheless, that it should so sound. For all this is true, and that not partially nor theoretically, but everlastingly and practically: all other doctrine than this respecting matters political being false in premises, absurd in deduction, and impossible in practice, consistently with any progressive state of national life; all the life which we now possess as a nation showing itself in the resolute denial and scorn, by a few strong minds and faithful hearts, of the economic principles taught to our multitudes, which principles, so far as accepted, lead straight

to national destruction. Respecting the modes and forms of destruction to which they lead, and, on the other hand, respecting the farther practical working of true polity, I hope to reason further in a following paper.

ESSAY II.

THE VEINS OF WEALTH

26 The answer which would be made by any ordinary political economist to the statements contained in the preceding paper, is in few words as follows :—

"It is indeed true that certain advantages of a general nature may be obtained by the development of social affections. But political economists never professed, nor profess, to take advantages of a general nature into consideration. Our science is simply the science of getting rich. So far from being a fallacious or visionary one, it is found by experience to be practically effective. Persons who follow its precepts do actually become rich, and persons who disobey them become poor. Every capitalist of Europe has acquired his fortune by following the known laws of our science, and increases his capital daily by an adherence to them. It is vain to bring forward tricks of logic, against the force of accomplished facts. Every man of business knows by experience how money is made, and how it is lost."

Pardon me. Men of business do indeed know how they themselves made their money, or how, on occasion, they lost

it. Playing a long-practised game, they are familiar with the chances of its cards, and can rightly explain their losses and gains. But they neither know who keeps the bank of the gambling-house, nor what other games may be played with the same cards, nor what other losses and gains, far away among the dark streets, are essentially, though invisibly, dependent on theirs in the lighted rooms. They have learned a few, and only a few, of the laws of mercantile economy; but not one of those of political economy.

Primarily, which is very notable and curious, I observe that men of business rarely know the meaning of the word "rich." At least if they know, they do not in their reasonings allow for the fact, that it is a relative word, implying its opposite "poor" as positively as the word "north" implies its opposite "south." Men nearly always speak and write as if riches were absolute, and it were possible, by following certain scientific precepts, for everybody to be rich. Whereas riches are a power like that of electricity, acting only through inequalities or negations of itself. The force of the guinea you have in your pocket depends wholly on the default of a guinea in your neighbour's pocket. If he did not want it, it would be of no use to you; the degree of power it possesses depends accurately upon the need or desire he has for it,—and the art of making yourself rich, in the ordinary mercantile economist's sense, is therefore

equally and necessarily the art of keeping your neighbour poor.

I would not contend in this matter (and rarely in any matter), for the acceptance of terms. But I wish the reader clearly and deeply to understand the difference between the two economies, to which the terms "Political" and "Mercantile" might not unadvisably be attached.

Political economy (the economy of a State, or of citizens) consists simply in the production, preservation, and distribution, at fittest time and place, of useful or pleasurable things. The farmer who cuts his hay at the right time; the shipwright who drives his bolts well home in sound wood; the builder who lays good bricks in well-tempered mortar; the housewife who takes care of her furniture in the parlour, and guards against all waste in her kitchen; and the singer who rightly disciplines, and never overstrains her voice: are all political economists in the true and final sense; adding continually to the riches and well-being of the nation to which they belong.

But mercantile economy, the economy of "merces" or of "pay," signifies the accumulation, in the hands of individuals, of legal or moral claim upon, or power over, the labour of others; every such claim implying precisely as much poverty or debt on one side, as it implies riches or right on the other.

It does not, therefore, necessarily involve an addition to

the actual property, or well-being, of the State in which it exists. But since this commercial wealth, or power over labour, is nearly always convertible at once into real property, while real property is not always convertible at once into power over labour, the idea of riches among active men in civilized nations, generally refers to commercial wealth; and in estimating their possessions, they rather calculate the value of their horses and fields by the number of guineas they could get for them, than the value of their guineas by the number of horses and fields they could buy with them.

There is, however, another reason for this habit of mind; namely, that an accumulation of real property is of little use to its owner, unless, together with it, he has commercial power over labour. Thus, suppose any person to be put in possession of a large estate of fruitful land, with rich beds of gold in its gravel, countless herds of cattle in its pastures; houses, and gardens, and storehouses full of useful stores, but suppose, after all, that he could get no servants? In order that he may be able to have servants, some one in his neighbourhood must be poor, and in want of his gold—or his corn. Assume that no one is in want of either, and that no servants are to be had. He must, therefore, bake his own bread, make his own clothes, plough his own ground, and shepherd his own flocks. His gold will be as useful to him as any other yellow pebbles on his estate. His stores must

rot, for he cannot consume them. He can eat no more than another man could eat, and wear no more than another man could wear. He must lead a life of severe and common labour to procure even ordinary comforts; he will be ultimately unable to keep either houses in repair, or fields in cultivation; and forced to content himself with a poor man's portion of cottage and garden, in the midst of a desert of waste land, trampled by wild cattle, and encumbered by ruins of palaces, which he will hardly mock at himself by calling "his own."

The most covetous of mankind would, with small exultation, I presume, accept riches of this kind on these terms. What is really desired, under the name of riches, is, essentially, power over men; in its simplest sense, the power of obtaining for our own advantage the labour of servant, tradesman, and artist; in wider sense, authority of directing large masses of the nation to various ends (good, trivial, or hurtful, according to the mind of the rich person). And this power of wealth of course is greater or less in direct proportion to the poverty of the men over whom it is exercised, and in inverse proportion to the number of persons who are as rich as ourselves, and who are ready to give the same price for an article of which the supply is limited. If the musician is poor, he will sing for small pay, as long as there is only one person who can pay him; but if there be two

or three, he will sing for the one who offers him most. And thus the power of the riches of the patron (always imperfect and doubtful, as we shall see presently, even when most authoritative) depends first on the poverty of the artist, and then on the limitation of the number of equally wealthy persons, who also want seats at the concert. So that, as above stated, the art of becoming "rich," in the common sense, is not absolutely nor finally the art of accumulating much money for ourselves, but also of contriving that our neighbours shall have less. In accurate terms, it is "the art of establishing the maximum inequality in our own favour."

Now the establishment of such inequality cannot be shown in the abstract to be either advantageous or disadvantageous to the body of the nation. The rash and absurd assumption that such inequalities are necessarily advantageous, lies at the root of most of the popular fallacies on the subject of political economy. For the eternal and inevitable law in this matter is, that the beneficialness of the inequality depends, first, on the methods by which it was accomplished, and, secondly, on the purposes to which it is applied. Inequalities of wealth, unjustly established, have assuredly injured the nation in which they exist during their establishment; and, unjustly directed, injure it yet more during their existence. But inequalities of wealth justly established, benefit the nation in the course of their

establishment; and nobly used, aid it yet more by their existence. That is to say, among every active and well-governed people, the various strength of individuals, tested by full exertion and specially applied to various need, issues in unequal, but harmonious results, receiving reward or authority according to its class and service;* while in the

* I have been naturally asked several times, with respect to the sentence in the first of these papers, "the bad workmen unemployed," "But what are you to do with your bad unemployed workmen?" Well, it seems to me the question might have occurred to you before. Your housemaid's place is vacant—you give twenty pounds a year—two girls come for it, one neatly dressed, the other dirtily; one with good recommendations, the other with none. You do not, under these circumstances, usually ask the dirty one if she will come for fifteen pounds, or twelve; and, on her consenting, take her instead of the well-recommended one. Still less do you try to beat both down by making them bid against each other, till you can hire both, one at twelve pounds a year, and the other at eight. You simply take the one fittest for the place, and send away the other, not perhaps concerning yourself quite as much as you should with the question which you now impatiently put to me, "What is to become of her?" For all that I advise you to do, is to deal with workmen as with servants; and verily the question is of weight: "Your bad workman, idler, and rogue—what are you to do with him?"

We will consider of this presently: remember that the administration of a complete system of national commerce and industry cannot be explained in full detail within the space of twelve pages. Meantime, consider whether

inactive or ill-governed nation, the gradations of decay and the victories of treason work out also their own rugged system of subjection and success; and substitute, for the melodious inequalities of concurrent power, the iniquitous dominances and depressions of guilt and misfortune.

Thus the circulation of wealth in a nation resembles that of the blood in the natural body. There is one quickness of the current which comes of cheerful emotion or wholesome exercise; and another which comes of shame or of fever. There is a flush of the body which is full of warmth and life; and another which will pass into putrefaction.

The analogy will hold, down even to minute particulars. For as diseased local determination of the blood involves depression of the general health of the system, all morbid local action of riches will be found ultimately to involve a weakening of the resources of the body politic.

there being confessedly some difficulty in dealing with rogues and idlers, it may not be advisable to produce as few of them as possible. If you examine into the history of rogues, you will find they are as truly manufactured articles as anything else, and it is just because our present system of political economy gives so large a stimulus to that manufacture that you may know it to be a false one. We had better seek for a system which will develop honest men, than for one which will deal cunningly with vagabonds. Let us reform our schools, and we shall find little reform needed in our prisons.

The mode in which this is produced may be at once understood by examining one or two instances of the development of wealth in the simplest possible circumstances.

Suppose two sailors cast away on an uninhabited coast, and obliged to maintain themselves there by their own labour for a series of years.

If they both kept their health, and worked steadily, and in amity with each other, they might build themselves a convenient house, and in time come to possess a certain quantity of cultivated land, together with various stores laid up for future use. All these things would be real riches or property; and supposing the men both to have worked equally hard, they would each have right to equal share or use of it. Their political economy would consist merely in careful preservation and just division of these possessions. Perhaps, however, after some time one or other might be dissatisfied with the results of their common farming; and they might in consequence agree to divide the land they had brought under the spade into equal shares, so that each might thenceforward work in his own field and live by it. Suppose that after this arrangement had been made, one of them were to fall ill, and be unable to work on his land at a critical time—say of sowing or harvest.

He would naturally ask the other to sow or reap for him.

Then his companion might say, with perfect justice, "I

will do this additioual work for you; but if I do it, you must promise to do as much for me at another time. I will count how many hours I spend on your ground, and you shall give me a written promise to work for the same number of hours on mine, whenever I need your help, and you are able to give it."

Suppose the disabled man's sickness to continue, and that under various circumstances, for several years, requiring the help of the other, he on each occasion gave a written pledge to work, as soon as he was able, at his companion's orders, for the same number of hours which the other had given up to him. What will the positions of the two men be when the invalid is able to resume work?

Considered as a "Polis," or state, they will be poorer than they would have been otherwise: poorer by the withdrawal of what the sick man's labour would have produced in the interval. His friend may perhaps have toiled with an energy quickened by the enlarged need, but in the end his own land and property must have suffered by the withdrawal of so much of his time and thought from them; and the united property of the two men will be certainly less than it would have been if both had remained in health and activity.

But the relations in which they stand to each other are also widely altered. The sick man has not only pledged his labour for some years, but will probably have exhausted his

own share of the accumulated stores, and will be in consequence for some time dependent on the other for food, which he can only "pay" or reward him for by yet more deeply pledging his own labour.

Supposing the written promises to be held entirely valid (among civilized nations their validity is secured by legal measures*), the person who had hitherto worked for both might now, if he chose, rest altogether, and pass his time in idleness, not only forcing his companion to redeem all the engagements he had already entered into, but exacting from him pledges for further labour, to an arbitrary amount, for what food he had to advance to him.

There might not, from first to last, be the least illegality

* The disputes which exist respecting the real nature of money arise more from the disputants examining its functions on different sides, than from any real dissent in their opinions. All money, properly so called, is an acknowledgment of debt; but as such, it may either be considered to represent the labour and property of the creditor, or the idleness and penury of the debtor. The intricacy of the question has been much increased by the (hitherto necessary) use of marketable commodities, such as gold, silver, salt, shells, &c., to give intrinsic value or security to currency; but the final and best definition of money is that it is a documentary promise ratified and guaranteed by the nation to give or find a certain quantity of labour on demand. A man's labour for a day is a better standard of value than a measure of any produce, because no produce ever maintains a consistent rate of productibility.

(in the ordinary sense of the word) in the arrangement; but if a stranger arrived on the coast at this advanced epoch of their political economy, he would find one man commercially Rich; the other commercially Poor. He would see, perhaps with no small surprise, one passing his days in idleness; the other labouring for both, and living sparely, in the hope of recovering his independence, at some distant period.

This is, of course, an example of one only out of many ways in which inequality of possession may be established between different persons, giving rise to the mercantile forms of Riches and Poverty. In the instance before us, one of the men might from the first have deliberately chosen to be idle, and to put his life in pawn for present ease; or he might have mismanaged his land, and been compelled to have recourse to his neighbour for food and help, pledging his future labour for it. But what I want the reader to note especially is the fact, common to a large number of typical cases of this kind, that the establishment of the mercantile wealth which consists in a claim upon labour, signifies a political diminution of the real wealth which consists in substantial possessions.

Take another example, more consistent with the ordinary course of affairs of trade. Suppose that three men, instead of two, formed the little isolated republic, and found them-

selves obliged to separate in order to farm different pieces of land at some distance from each other along the coast; each estate furnishing a distinct kind of produce, and each more or less in need of the material raised on the other. Suppose that the third man, in order to save the time of all three, undertakes simply to superintend the transference of commodities from one farm to the other; on condition of receiving some sufficiently remunerative share of every parcel of goods conveyed, or of some other parcel received in exchange for it.

If this carrier or messenger always brings to each estate, from the other, what is chiefly wanted, at the right time, the operations of the two farmers will go on prosperously, and the largest possible result in produce, or wealth, will be attained by the little community. But suppose no intercourse between the land owners is possible, except through the travelling agent; and that, after a time, this agent, watching the course of each man's agriculture, keeps back the articles with which he has been entrusted until there comes a period of extreme necessity for them, on one side or other, and then exacts in exchange for them all that the distressed farmer can spare of other kinds of produce; it is easy to see that by ingeniously watching his opportunities, he might possess himself regularly of the greater part of the superfluous produce of the two estates, and at

last, in some year of severest trial or scarcity, purchase both for himself, and maintain the former proprietors thence forward as his labourers or his servants.

This would be a case of commercial wealth acquired on the exactest principles of modern political economy. But more distinctly even than in the former instance, it is manifest in this that the wealth of the State, or of the three men considered as a society, is collectively less than it would have been had the merchant been content with juster profit. The operations of the two agriculturists have been cramped to the utmost; and the continual limitations of the supply of things they wanted at critical times, together with the failure of courage consequent on the prolongation of a struggle for mere existence, without any sense of permanent gain, must have seriously diminished the effective results of their labour; and the stores finally accumulated in the merchant's hands will not in anywise be of equivalent value to those which, had his dealings been honest, would have filled at once the granaries of the farmers and his own.

The whole question, therefore, respecting not only the advantage, but even the quantity, of national wealth, resolves itself finally into one of abstract justice. It is impossible to conclude, of any given mass of acquired wealth, merely by the fact of its existence, whether it signifies good or evil to the nation in the midst of which it exists. Its real value

depends on the moral sign attached to it, just as stern...ou that of a mathematical quantity depends on the algebraical sign attached to it. Any given accumulation of commercial wealth may be indicative, on the one hand, of faithful industries, progressive energies, and productive ingenuities; or, on the other, it may be indicative of mortal luxury, merciless tyranny, ruinous chicane. Some treasures are heavy with human tears, as an ill-stored harvest with untimely rain; and some gold is brighter in sunshine than it is in substance.

And these are not, observe, merely moral or pathetic attributes of riches, which the seeker of riches may, if he chooses, despise; they are literally and sternly, material attributes of riches, depreciating or exalting, incalculably, the monetary signification of the sum in question. One mass of money is the outcome of action which has created,—another, of action which has annihilated,—ten times as much in the gathering of it; such and such strong hands have been paralyzed, as if they had been numbed by nightshade: so many strong men's courage broken, so many productive operations hindered; this and the other false direction given to labour, and lying image of prosperity set up, on Dura plains dug into seven-times-heated furnaces. That which seems to be wealth may in verity be only the gilded index of far-reaching ruin; a wrecker's handful of coin gleaned from the beach to which he

last, as beguiled an argosy; a camp-follower's bundle of rags unwrapped from the breasts of goodly soldiers dead; the purchase-pieces of potter's fields, wherein shall be buried together the citizen and the stranger.

And therefore, the idea that directions can be given for the gaining of wealth, irrespectively of the consideration of its moral sources, or that any general and technical law of purchase and gain can be set down for national practice, is perhaps the most insolently futile of all that ever beguiled men through their vices. So far as I know, there is not in history record of anything so disgraceful to the human intellect as the modern idea that the commercial text, "Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest," represents, or under any circumstances could represent, an available principle of national economy. Buy in the cheapest market?—yes; but what made your market cheap? Charcoal may be cheap among your roof timbers after a fire, and bricks may be cheap in your streets after an earthquake; but fire and earthquake may not therefore be national benefits. Sell in the dearest?—yes, truly; but what made your market dear? You sold your bread well to-day; was it to a dying man who gave his last coin for it, and will never need bread more, or to a rich man who to-morrow will buy your farm over your head; or to a soldier on his way to pillage the bank in which you have put your fortune?

None of these things you can know. One thing only you can know, namely, whether this dealing of yours is a just and faithful one, which is all you need concern yourself about respecting it; sure thus to have done your own part in bringing about ultimately in the world a state of things which will not issue in pillage or in death. And thus every question concerning these things merges itself ultimately in the great question of justice, which, the ground being thus far cleared for it, I will enter upon in the next paper, leaving only, in this, three final points for the reader's consideration.

39. It has been shown that the chief value and virtue of money consists in its having power over human beings; that, without this power, large material possessions are useless, and to any person possessing such power, comparatively unnecessary. But power over human beings is attainable by other means than by money. As I said a few pages back, the money power is always imperfect and doubtful; there are many things which cannot be retained by it. Many joys may be given to men which cannot be bought for gold, and many fidelities found in them which cannot be rewarded with it.

Trite enough,—the reader thinks. Yes: but it is not so trite,—I wish it were,—that in this moral power, quite inscrutable and immeasurable though it be, there is a monetary value just as real as that represented by more ponderous currencies. A man's hand may be full of invisible gold, and

the wave of it, or the grasp, shall do more than another's with a shower of bullion. This invisible gold, also, does not necessarily diminish in spending. Political economists wil do well some day to take heed of it, though they cannot take measure.

But farther. Since the essence of wealth consists in its authority over men, if the apparent or nominal wealth fail in this power, it fails in essence; in fact, ceases to be wealth at all. It does not appear lately in England, that our authority over men is absolute. The servants show some disposition to rush riotously upstairs, under an impression that their wages are not regularly paid. We should augur ill of any gentleman's property to whom this happened every other day in his drawing-room.

So also, the power of our wealth seems limited as respects the comfort of the servants, no less than their quietude. The persons in the kitchen appear to be ill-dressed, squalid, half-starved. One cannot help imagining that the riches of the establishment must be of a very theoretical and documentary character.

Finally. Since the essence of wealth consists in power over men, will it not follow that the nobler and the more in number the persons are over whom it has power, the greater the wealth? Perhaps it may even appear after some consideration, that the persons themselves *are* the wealth—that these

pieces of gold with which we are in the habit of guiding them, are, in fact, nothing more than a kind of Byzantine harness or trappings, very glittering and beautiful in barbaric sight, wherewith we bridle the creatures; but that if these same living creatures could be guided without the fretting and jingling of the Byzants in their mouths and ears, they might themselves be more valuable than their bridles. In fact, it may be discovered that the true veins of wealth are purple—and not in Rock, but in Flesh—perhaps even that the final outcome and consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-hearted human creatures. Our modern wealth, I think, has rather a tendency the other way;—most political economists appearing to consider multitudes of human creatures not conducive to wealth, or at best conducive to it only by remaining in a dim-eyed and narrow-chested state of being.

Nevertheless, it is open, I repeat, to serious question, which I leave to the reader's pondering, whether, among national manufactures, that of Souls of a good quality may not at last turn out a quite leadingly lucrative one? Nay, in some far-away and yet undreamt-of hour, I can even imagine that England may cast all thoughts of possessive wealth back to the barbaric nations among whom they first arose; and that, while the sands of the Indus and adamant

of Golconda may yet stiffen the housings of the charger, and flash from the turban of the slave, she, as a Christian mother, may at last attain to the virtues and the treasures of a Heathen one, and be able to lead forth her Sons, saying,—

"These are MY Jewels."

ESSAY III.

QUI JUDICATIS TERRAM.

SOME centuries before the Christian era, a Jew merchant largely engaged in business on the Gold Coast, and reported to have made one of the largest fortunes of his time (held also in repute for much practical sagacity), left among his ledgers some general maxims concerning wealth, which have been preserved, strangely enough, even to our own days. They were held in considerable respect by the most active traders of the middle ages, especially by the Venetians, who even went so far in their admiration as to place a statue of the old Jew on the angle of one of their principal public buildings. Of late years these writings have fallen into disrepute, being opposed in every particular to the spirit of modern commerce. Nevertheless I shall reproduce a passage or two from them here, partly because they may interest the reader by their novelty; and chiefly because they will show him that it is possible for a very practical and acquisitive tradesman to hold, through a not unsuccessful career, that principle of distinction between well-gotten and ill-gotten wealth, which, partially insisted

on in my last paper, it must be our work more completely to examine in this.

43. He says, for instance, in one place: "The getting of treasure by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death:" adding in another, with the same meaning (he has a curious way of doubling his sayings): "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing; but justice delivers from death." Both these passages are notable for their assertion of death as the only real issue and sum of attainment by any unjust scheme of wealth. If we read, instead of "lying tongue," "lying label, title, pretence, or advertisement," we shall more clearly perceive the bearing of the words on modern business. The seeking of death is a grand expression of the true course of men's toil in such business. We usually speak as if death pursued us, and we fled from him; but that is only so in rare instances. Ordinarily, he masks himself—makes himself beautiful—all-glorious; not like the King's daughter, all-glorious within, but outwardly: his clothing of wrought gold. We pursue him frantically all our days, he flying or hiding from us. Our crowning success at three-score and ten is utterly and perfectly to seize, and hold him in his eternal integrity—robes, ashes, and sting.

Again: the merchant says, "He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, shall surely come to want." And

again, more strongly: "Rob not the poor because he is poor; neither oppress the afflicted in the place of business. For God shall spoil the soul of those that spoiled them."

This "robbing the poor because he is poor," is especially the mercantile form of theft, consisting in taking advantage of a man's necessities in order to obtain his labour or property at a reduced price. The ordinary highwayman's opposite form of robbery—of the rich, because he is rich—does not appear to occur so often to the old merchant's mind; probably because, being less profitable and more dangerous than the robbery of the poor, it is rarely practised by persons of discretion.

44. But the two most remarkable passages in their deep general significance are the following:—

"The rich and the poor have met. God is their maker."

"The rich and the poor have met. God is their light."

They "have met:" more literally, have stood in each other's way (*obviaverunt*). That is to say, as long as the world lasts, the action and counteraction of wealth and poverty, the meeting, face to face, of rich and poor, is just as appointed and necessary a law of that world as the flow of stream to sea, or the interchange of power among the electric clouds:—"God is their maker." But, also, this action may be either gentle and just, or convulsive and destructive it may be by rage of devouring flood, or by lapse of service

able wave;—in blackness of thunderstroke, or continual force of vital fire, soft, and shapeable into love-syllables from far away. And which of these it shall be depends on both rich and poor knowing that God is their light; that in the mystery of human life, there is no other light than this by which they can see each other's faces, and live;—light, which is called in another of the books among which the merchant's maxims have been preserved, the "sun of justice,"* of which it is promised that it shall rise at last with "healing" (health-giving or helping, making whole or setting at one) in its wings. For truly this healing is only possible by means of justice; no love, no faith, no hope will do it; men will be

* More accurately, Sun of Justness; but, instead of the harsh word 'Justness," the old English "Righteousness" being commonly employed, has, by getting confused with "godliness," or attracting about it various vague and broken meanings, prevented most persons from receiving the force of the passages in which it occurs. The word "righteousness" properly refers to the justice of rule, or right, as distinguished from "equity," which refers to the justice of balance. More broadly, Righteousness is King's justice; and Equity, Judge's justice; the King guiding or ruling all, the Judge dividing or discerning between opposites (therefore, the double question, "Man, who made me a ruler—δικαστὴς—or a divider—μεριστὴς—over you?") Thus, with respect to the Justice of Choice (selection, the feebler and passive justice), we have from lego,—lex, legal, loi, and loyal and with respect to the Justice of Rule (direction, the stronger and active justice), we have from rego,—rex, regal, roi, and royal.

unwisely fond—vainly faithful, unless primarily they are just; and the mistake of the best men through generation after generation, has been that great one of thinking to help the poor by almsgiving, and by preaching of patience or of hope, and by every other means, emollient or consolatory, except the one thing which God orders for them, justice. But this justice, with its accompanying holiness or helpfulness, being even by the best men denied in its trial time, is by the mass of men hated wherever it appears: so that, when the choice was one day fairly put to them, they denied the Helpful One and the Just;* and desired a murderer, sedition-raiser, and robber, to be granted to them;—the murderer instead of the Lord of Life, the sedition-raiser instead of the Prince of Peace, and the robber instead of the Just Judge of all the world.

43. I have just spoken of the flowing of streams to the sea as a partial image of the action of wealth. In one respect it is not a partial, but a perfect image. The popular economist thinks himself wise in having discovered that wealth, or the forms of property in general, must go where they are required; that where demand is, supply must follow. He farther declares that this course of demand and supply cannot be forbidden by human laws. Precisely in the same sense,

* In another place written with the same meaning, "Just, and having salvation."

and with the same certainty, the waters of the world go where they are required. Where the land falls, the water flows. The course neither of clouds nor rivers can be forbidden by human will. But the disposition and administration of them can be altered by human forethought. Whether the stream shall be a curse or a blessing, depends upon man's labour, and administrating intelligence. For centuries after centuries, great districts of the world, rich in soil, and favoured in climate, have lain desert under the rage of their own rivers; nor only desert, but plague-struck. The stream which, rightly directed, would have flowed in soft irrigation from field to field—would have purified the air, given food to man and beast, and carried their burdens for them on its bosom—now overwhelms the plain, and poisons the wind; its breath pestilence, and its work famine. In like manner this wealth "goes where it is required." No human laws can withstand its flow. They can only guide it: but this, the leading trench and limiting mound can do so thoroughly, that it shall become water of life—the riches of the hand of wisdom;* or, on the contrary, by leaving it to its own lawless flow, they may make it, what it has been too often, the last and deadliest of national plagues: water of Marah—the water which feeds the roots of all evil.

The necessity of these laws of distribution or restraint

* "Length of days in her right hand; in her left, riches and honour."

is curiously overlooked in the ordinary political economist's definition of his own "science." He calls it, shortly, the "science of getting rich." But there are many sciences, as well as many arts, of getting rich. Poisoning people of large estates, was one employed largely in the middle ages; adulteration of food of people of small estates, is one employed largely now. The ancient and honourable Highland method of black mail; the more modern and less honourable system of obtaining goods on credit, and the other variously improved methods of appropriation—which, in major and minor scales of industry, down to the most artistic pocket-picking, we owe to recent genius,—all come under the general head of sciences, or arts, of getting rich.

So that it is clear the popular economist, in calling his science the science *par excellence* of getting rich, must attach some peculiar ideas of limitation to its character. I hope I do not misrepresent him, by assuming that he means *his* science to be the science of "getting rich by legal or just means." In this definition, is the word "just," or "legal," finally to stand? For it is possible among certain nations, or under certain rulers, or by help of certain advocates, that proceedings may be legal which are by no means just. If, therefore, we leave at last only the word "just" in that place of our definition, the insertion of this solitary and small word will make a notable difference in the grammar of our science.

For then it will follow that, in order to grow rich scientifically, we must grow rich justly; and, therefore, know what is just; so that our economy will no longer depend merely on prudence, but on jurisprudence—and that of divine, not human law. Which prudence is indeed of no mean order, holding itself, as it were, high in the air of heaven, and gazing for ever on the light of the sun of justice; hence the souls which have excelled in it are represented by Dante as stars forming in heaven for ever the figure of the eye of an eagle: they having been in life the discerners of light from darkness; or to the whole human race, as the light of the body, which is the eye; while those souls which form the wings of the bird (giving power and dominion to justice, "healing in its wings") trace also in light the inscription in heaven: "DILIGITE JUSTITIAM QUI JUDICATIS TERRAM." "Ye who judge the earth, give" (not, observe, merely love, but) "diligent love to justice:" the love which seeks diligently, that is to say, choosingly, and by preference to all things else. Which judging or doing judgment in the earth is, according to their capacity and position, required not of judges only, nor of rulers only, but of all men:* a truth sorrowfully lost

* I hear that several of our lawyers have been greatly amused by the statement in the first of these papers that a lawyer's function was to do justice. I do not intend it for a jest; nevertheless it will be seen that in the above passage neither the determination nor doing of justice are contem-

sight of even by those who are ready enough to apply to themselves passages in which Christian men are spoken of as called to be "saints" (*i.e.* to helpful or healing functions), and "chosen to be kings" (*i.e.* to knowing or directing functions); the true meaning of these titles having been long lost through the pretences of unhelpful and unable persons to saintly and kingly character; also through the once popular idea that both the sanctity and royalty are to consist in wearing long robes and high crowns, instead of in mercy and judgment; whereas all true sanctity is saving power, as all true royalty is ruling power; and injustice is part and parcel of the denial of such power, which "makes men as the creeping things, as the fishes of the sea, that have no ruler over them." *

47 Absolute justice is indeed no more attainable than absolute truth; but the righteous man is distinguished from the unrighteous by his desire and hope of justice, as the true

plated as functions wholly peculiar to the lawyer. Possibly, the more our standing armies, whether of soldiers, pastors, or legislators (the generic term "pastor" including all teachers, and the generic term "lawyer" including makers as well as interpreters of law), can be superseded by the force of national heroism, wisdom, and honesty, the better it may be for the nation

* It being the privilege of the fishes, as it is of rats and wolves, to live by the laws of demand and supply; but the distinction of humanity, to live by those of right.

man from the false by his desire and hope of truth. And though absolute justice be unattainable, as much justice as we need for all practical use is attainable by all those who make it their aim.

We have to examine, then, in the subject before us, what are the laws of justice respecting payment of labour—no small part, these, of the foundations of all jurisprudence.

I reduced, in my last paper, the idea of money payment to its simplest or radical terms. In those terms its nature, and the conditions of justice respecting it, can be best ascertained.

Money payment, as there stated, consists radically in a promise to some person working for us, that for the time and labour he spends in our service to-day we will give or procure equivalent time and labour in his service at any future time when he may demand it.*

* It might appear at first that the market price of labour expressed such an exchange: but this is a fallacy, for the market price is the momentary price of the kind of labour required, but the just price is its equivalent of the productive labour of mankind. This difference will be analyzed in its place. It must be noted also that I speak here only of the exchangeable value of labour, not of that of commodities. The exchangeable value of a commodity is that of the labour required to produce it, multiplied into the force of the demand for it. If the value of the labour $= x$ and the force of the demand $= y$, the exchangeable value of the commodity is xy, in which if either $x = 0$, or $y = 0$, $xy = 0$

If we promise to give him less labour than he has given us, we under-pay him. If we promise to give him more labour than he has given us, we over-pay him. In practice, according to the laws of demand and supply, when two men are ready to do the work, and only one man wants to have it done, the two men underbid each other for it; and the one who gets it to do, is under-paid. But when two men want the work done, and there is only one man ready to do it, the two men who want it done over-bid each other, and the workman is over-paid.

78 I will examine these two points of injustice in succession, but first I wish the reader to clearly understand the central principle, lying between the two, of right or just payment.

When we ask a service of any man, he may either give it us freely, or demand payment for it. Respecting free gift of service, there is no question at present, that being a matter of affection—not of traffic. But if he demand payment for it, and we wish to treat him with absolute equity, it is evident that this equity can only consist in giving time for time, strength for strength, and skill for skill. If a man works an hour for us, and we only promise to work half-an-hour for him in return, we obtain an unjust advantage. If, on the contrary, we promise to work an hour and a half for him in return, he has an unjust advantage. The justice consists in absolute exchange; or, if

there be any respect to the stations of the parties, it will not be in favour of the employer: there is certainly no equitable reason in a man's being poor, that if he give me a pound of bread to-day, I should return him less than a pound of bread to-morrow; or any equitable reason in a man's being uneducated, that if he uses a certain quantity of skill and knowledge in my service, I should use a less quantity of skill and knowledge in his. Perhaps, ultimately, it may appear desirable, or, to say the least, gracious, that I should give in return somewhat more than I received. But at present, we are concerned on the law of justice only, which is that of perfect and accurate exchange;—one circumstance only interfering with the simplicity of this radical idea of just payment—that inasmuch as labour (rightly directed) is fruitful just as seed is, the fruit (or "interest," as it is called) of the labour first given, or "advanced," ought to be taken into account, and balanced by an additional quantity of labour in the subsequent repayment. Supposing the repayment to take place at the end of a year, or of any other given time, this calculation could be approximately made; but as money (that is to say, cash) payment involves no reference to time (it being optional with the person paid to spend what he receives at once or after any number of years), we can only assume, generally, that some slight advantage must in equity be allowed to

the person who advances the labour, so that the typical form of bargain will be: If you give me an hour to-day, I will give you an hour and five minutes on demand. If you give me a pound of bread to-day, I will give you seventeen ounces on demand, and so on. All that it is necessary for the reader to note is, that the amount returned is at least in equity not to be *less* than the amount given.

The abstract idea, then, of just or due wages, as respects the labourer, is that they will consist in a sum of money which will at any time procure for him at least as much labour as he has given, rather more than less. And this equity or justice of payment is, observe, wholly independent of any reference to the number of men who are willing to do the work. I want a horseshoe for my horse. Twenty smiths, or twenty thousand smiths, may be ready to forge it; their number does not in one atom's weight affect the question of the equitable payment of the one who *does* forge it. It costs him a quarter of an hour of his life, and so much skill and strength of arm to make that horseshoe for me. Then at some future time I am bound in equity to give a quarter of an hour, and some minutes more, of my life (or of some other person's at my disposal), and also as much strength of arm and skill, and a little more, in making or doing what the smith may have need of.

Such being the abstract theory of just remunerative pay

ment, its application is practically modified by the fact that the order for labour, given in payment, is general, while labour received is special. The current coin or document is practically an order on the nation for so much work of any kind; and this universal applicability to immediate need renders it so much more valuable than special labour can be, that an order for a less quantity of this general toil will always be accepted as a just equivalent for a greater quantity of special toil. Any given craftsman will always be willing to give an hour of his own work in order to receive command over half-an-hour, or even much less, of national work. This source of uncertainty, together with the difficulty of determining the monetary value of skill,* renders the ascertainment

* Under the term "skill" I mean to include the united force of experience, intellect, and passion in their operation on manual labour: and under the term "passion," to include the entire range and agency of the moral feelings; from the simple patience and gentleness of mind which will give continuity and fineness to the touch, or enable one person to work without fatigue, and with good effect, twice as long as another, up to the qualities of character which render science possible—(the retardation of science by envy is one of the most tremendous losses in the economy of the present century)—and to the incommunicable emotion and imagination which are the first and mightiest sources of all value in art.

It is highly singular that political economists should not yet have perceived, if not the moral, at least the passionate element, to be an inextricable quantity in every calculation. I cannot conceive, for instance, how it

(even approximate) of the proper wages of any given labour in terms of a currency, matter of considerable complexity But they do not affect the principle of exchange. The worth of the work may not be easily known; but it *has* a worth, just as fixed and real as the specific gravity of a substance, though such specific gravity may not be easily ascertainable

was possible that Mr. Mill should have followed the true clue so far as to write,—"No limit can be set to the importance—even in a purely productive and material point of view—of mere thought," without seeing that it was logically necessary to add also, "and of mere feeling." And this the more, because in his first definition of labour he includes in the idea of it "all feelings of a disagreeable kind connected with the employment of one's thoughts in a particular occupation." True; but why not also, "feelings of an agreeable kind?" It can hardly be supposed that the feelings which retard labour are more essentially a part of the labour than those which accelerate it. The first are paid for as pain, the second as power. The workman is merely indemnified for the first; but the second both produce a part of the exchangeable value of the work, and materially increase its actual quantity.

"Fritz is with us. *He* is worth fifty thousand men." Truly, a large addition to the material force;—consisting, however, be it observed, not more in operations carried on in Fritz's head, than in operations carried on in his armies' heart. "No limit can be set to the importance of *mere* thought." Perhaps not! Nay, suppose some day it should turn out that "mere" thought was in itself a recommendable object of production, and that all Material production was only a step towards this more precious Immaterial one?

when the substance is united with many others. Nor is there any difficulty or chance in determining it as in determining the ordinary maxima and minima of vulgar political economy. There are few bargains in which the buyer can ascertain with anything like precision that the seller would have taken no less;—or the seller acquire more than a comfortable faith that the purchaser would have given no more. This impossibility of precise knowledge prevents neither from striving to attain the desired point of greatest vexation and injury to the other, nor from accepting it for a scientific principle that he is to buy for the least and sell for the most possible, though what the real least or most may be he cannot tell. In like manner, a just person lays it down for a scientific principle that he is to pay a just price, and, without being able precisely to ascertain the limits of such a price, will nevertheless strive to attain the closest possible approximation to them. A practically serviceable approximation he *can* obtain. It is easier to determine scientifically what a man ought to have for his work, than what his necessities will compel him to take for it. His necessities can only be ascertained by empirical, but his due by analytical investigation. In the one case, you try your answer to the sum like a puzzled schoolboy—till you find one that fits; in the other, you bring out your result within certain limits, by process of calculation.

50 Supposing, then, the just wages of any quantity of given

labour to have been ascertained, let us examine the first results of just and unjust payment, when in favour of the purchaser or employer; *i. e.* when two men are ready to do the work, and only one wants to have it done.

The unjust purchaser forces the two to bid against each other till he has reduced their demand to its lowest terms. Let us assume that the lowest bidder offers to do the work at half its just price.

The purchaser employs him, and does not employ the other. The first or *apparent* result is, therefore, that one of the two men is left out of employ, or to starvation, just as definitely as by the just procedure of giving fair price to the best workman. The various writers who endeavoured to invalidate the positions of my first paper never saw this, and assumed that the unjust hirer employed *both*. He employs both no more than the just hirer. The only difference (in the outset) is that the just man pays sufficiently, the unjust man insufficiently, for the labour of the single person employed.

I say, "in the outset;" for this first or apparent difference is not the actual difference. By the unjust procedure, half the proper price of the work is left in the hands of the employer. This enables him to hire another man at the same unjust rate, on some other kind of work; and the final result is that he has two men working for him at half price, and two are out of employ.

By the just procedure, the whole price of the first piece of work goes into the hands of the man who does it. No surplus being left in the employer's hands, *he* cannot hire another man for another piece of labour. But by precisely so much as his power is diminished, the hired workman's power is increased; that is to say, by the additional half of the price he has received; which additional half *he* has the power of using to employ another man in *his* service I will suppose, for the moment, the least favourable, though quite probable, case—that, though justly treated himself, he yet will act unjustly to his subordinate; and hire at half-price, if he can. The final result will then be, that one man works for the employer, at just price; one for the workman, at half-price; and two, as in the first case, are still out of employ. These two, as I said before, are out of employ in *both* cases. The difference between the just and unjust procedure does not lie in the number of men hired, but in the price paid to them, and the *persons by whom* it is paid. The essential difference, that which I want the reader to see clearly, is, that in the unjust case two men work for one, the first hirer. In the just case, one man works for the first hirer, one for the person hired, and so on, down or up through the various grades of service; the influence being carried forward by justice, and arrested by injustice. The universal and constant action of

justice in this matter is therefore to diminish the power of wealth, in the hands of one individual, over masses of men, and to distribute it through a chain of men. The actual power exerted by the wealth is the same in both cases; but by injustice it is put all in one man's hands, so that he directs at once and with equal force the labour of a circle of men about him; by the just procedure, he is permitted to touch the nearest only, through whom, with diminished force, modified by new minds, the energy of the wealth passes on to others, and so till it exhausts itself.

The immediate operation of justice in this respect is therefore to diminish the power of wealth, first in acquisition of luxury, and, secondly, in exercise of moral influence. The employer cannot concentrate so multitudinous labour on his own interests, nor can he subdue so multitudinous mind to his own will. But the secondary operation of justice is not less important. The insufficient payment of the group of men working for one, places each under a maximum of difficulty in rising above his position. The tendency of the system is to check advancement. But the sufficient or just payment, distributed through a descending series of offices or grades of labour,* gives each subordinated

* I am sorry to lose time by answering, however curtly, the equivocations of the writers who sought to obscure the instances given o'

person fair and sufficient means of rising in the social scale, if he chooses to use them; and thus not only diminishes the immediate power of wealth, but removes the worst disabilities of poverty.

It is on this vital problem that the entire destiny of the labourer is ultimately dependent. Many minor interests

regulated labour in the first of these papers, by confusing kinds, ranks, and quantities of labour with its qualities. I never said that a colonel should have the same pay as a private, nor a bishop the same pay as a curate. Neither did I say that more work ought to be paid as less work (so that the curate of a parish of two thousand souls should have no more than the curate of a parish of five hundred). But I said that, so far as you employ it at all, bad work should be paid no less than good work; as a bad clergyman yet takes his tithes, a bad physician takes his fee, and a bad lawyer his costs. And this, as will be farther shown in the conclusion, I said, and say, partly because the best work never was nor ever will be, done for money at all; but chiefly because, the moment people know they have to pay the bad and good alike, they will try to discern the one from the other, and not use the bad. A sagacious writer in the *Scotsman* asks me if I should like any common scribbler to be paid by Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co. as their good authors are. I should, if they employed him—but would seriously recommend them, for the scribbler's sake, as well as their own, *not* to employ him. The quantity of its money which the country at present invests in scribbling is not, in the outcome of it, economically spent; and even the highly ingenious person to whom this question occurred, might perhaps have been more beneficially employed than in printing it.

may sometimes appear to interfere with it, but all branch from it. For instance, considerable agitation is often caused in the minds of the lower classes when they discover the share which they nominally, and, to all appearance, actually, pay out of their wages in taxation (I believe thirty-five or forty per cent.). This sounds very grievous; but in reality the labourer does not pay it, but his employer. If the workman had not to pay it, his wages would be less by just that sum: competition would still reduce them to the lowest rate at which life was possible. Similarly the lower orders agitated for the repeal of the corn laws,* thinking

* I have to acknowledge an interesting communication on the subject of free trade from Paisley (for a short letter from "A Well-wisher" at ——, my thanks are yet more due). But the Scottish writer will, I fear, be disagreeably surprised to hear, that I am, and always have been, an utterly fearless and unscrupulous free-trader. Seven years ago, speaking of the various signs of infancy in the European mind (*Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. p. 168), I wrote: "The first principles of commerce were acknowledged by the English parliament only a few months ago, and in its free-trade measures, and are still so little understood by the million, that *no nation dares to abolish its custom-houses.*"

It will be observed that I do not admit even the idea of reciprocity Let other nations, if they like, keep their ports shut; every wise nation will throw its own open. It is not the opening them, but a sudden, inconsiderate, and blunderingly experimental manner of opening them, which does the harm. If you have been protecting a manufacture for

they would be better off if bread were cheaper; never perceiving that as soon as bread was permanently cheaper, wages would permanently fall in precisely that proportion. The corn laws were rightly repealed; not, however, because they directly oppressed the poor, but because they indirectly oppressed them in causing a large quantity of their labour to be consumed unproductively. So also unnecessary tax-

long series of years, you must not take protection off in a moment, so as to throw every one of its operatives at once out of employ, any more than you must take all its wrappings off a feeble child at once in cold weather, though the cumber of them may have been radically injuring its health. Little by little, you must restore it to freedom and to air.

Most people's minds are in curious confusion on the subject of free trade, because they suppose it to imply enlarged competition. On the contrary, free trade puts an end to all competition. "Protection" (among various other mischievous functions) endeavours to enable one country to compete with another in the production of an article at a disadvantage. When trade is entirely free, no country can be competed with in the articles for the production of which it is naturally calculated; nor can it compete with any other in the production of articles for which it is not naturally calculated. Tuscany, for instance, cannot compete with England in steel, nor England with Tuscany in oil. They must exchange their steel and oil. Which exchange should be as frank and free as honesty and the sea-winds can make it. Competition, indeed, arises at first, and sharply, in order to prove which is strongest in any given manufacture possible to both; this point once ascertained, competition is at an end

ation oppresses them, through destruction of capital, but the destiny of the poor depends primarily always on this one question of dueness of wages. Their distress (irrespectively of that caused by sloth, minor error, or crime) arises on the grand scale from the two reacting forces of competition and oppression. There is not yet, nor will yet for ages be, any real over-population in the world; but a local over-population, or, more accurately, a degree of population locally unmanageable under existing circumstances for want of forethought and sufficient machinery, necessarily shows itself by pressure of competition; and the taking advantage of this competition by the purchaser to obtain their labour unjustly cheap, consummates at once their suffering and his own; for in this (as I believe in every other kind of slavery) the oppressor suffers at last more than the oppressed, and those magnificent lines of Pope, even in all their force, fall short of the truth—

> "Yet, to be just to these poor men of pelf,
> Each does but HATE HIS NEIGHBOUR AS HIMSELF:
> Damned to the mines, an equal fate betides
> The slave that digs it, and the slave that hides."

The collateral and reversionary operations of justice in this matter I shall examine hereafter (it being needful first to define the nature of value); proceeding then to consider within what practical terms a juster system may be established; and

ultimately the vexed question of the destinies of the unemployed workmen.* Lest, however, the reader should be alarmed at some of the issues to which our investigations seem to be tending, as if in their bearing against the power of

* I should be glad if the reader would first clear the ground for himself so far as to determine whether the difficulty lies in getting the work or getting the pay for it. Does he consider occupation itself to be an expensive luxury, difficult of attainment, of which too little is to be found in the world? or is it rather that, while in the enjoyment even of the most athletic delight, men must nevertheless be maintained, and this maintenance is not always forthcoming? We must be clear on this head before going farther, as most people are loosely in the habit of talking of the difficulty of "finding employment." Is it employment that we want to find, or support during employment? Is it idleness we wish to put an end to, or hunger? We have to take up both questions in succession, only not both at the same time. No doubt that work *is* a luxury, and a very great one. It is, indeed, at once a luxury and a necessity; no man can retain either health of mind or body without it. So profoundly do I feel this, that, as will be seen in the sequel, one of the principal objects I would recommend to benevolent and practical persons, is to induce rich people to seek for a larger quantity of this luxury than they at present possess. Nevertheless, it appears by experience that even this healthiest of pleasures may be indulged in to excess, and that human beings are just as liable to surfeit of labour as to surfeit of meat; so that, as on the one hand, it may be charitable to provide, for some people, lighter dinner, and more work,—for others it may be equally expedient to provide lighter work, and more dinner.

wealth they had something in common with those of socialism, I wish him to know, in accurate terms, one or two of the main points which I have in view.

Whether socialism has made more progress among the army and navy (where payment is made on my principles), or among the manufacturing operatives (who are paid on my opponents' principles), I leave it to those opponents to ascertain and declare. Whatever their conclusion may be, I think it necessary to answer for myself only this: that if there be any one point insisted on throughout my works more frequently than another, that one point is the impossibility of Equality. My continual aim has been to show the eternal superiority of some men to others, sometimes even of one man to all others; and to show also the advisability of appointing such persons or person to guide, to lead, or on occasion even to compel and subdue, their inferiors, according to their own better knowledge and wiser will. My principles of Political Economy were all involved in a single phrase spoken three years ago at Manchester: "Soldiers of the Ploughshare as well as soldiers of the Sword:" and they were all summed in a single sentence in the last volume of *Modern Painters*—"Government and co-operation are in all things the Laws of Life; Anarchy and competition the Laws of Death."

And with respect to the mode in which these general prin

ciples affect the secure possession of property, so far am I from invalidating such security, that the whole gist of these papers will be found ultimately to aim at an extension in its range; and whereas it has long been known and declared that the poor have no right to the property of the rich, I wish it also to be known and declared that the rich have no right to the property of the poor.

But that the working of the system which I have undertaken to develop would in many ways shorten the apparent and direct, though not the unseen and collateral, power, both of wealth, as the Lady of Pleasure, and of capital as the Lord of Toil, I do not deny: on the contrary, I affirm it in all joyfulness; knowing that the attraction of riches is already too strong, as their authority is already too weighty, for the reason of mankind. I said in my last paper that nothing in history had ever been so disgraceful to human intellect as the acceptance among us of the common doctrines of political economy as a science. I have many grounds for saying this, but one of the chief may be given in few words. I know no previous instance in history of a nation's establishing a systematic disobedience to the first principles of its professed religion. The writings which we (verbally) esteem as divine, not only denounce the love of money as the source of all evil, and as an idolatry abhorred of the Deity, but declare mammon service to be the accurate and irreconcileable opposite of

God's service; and, whenever they speak of riches absolute and poverty absolute, declare woe to the rich, and blessing to the poor. Whereupon we forthwith investigate a science of becoming rich, as the shortest road to national prosperity.

"Tai Cristian dannerà l'Etiòpe,
Quando si partiranno i due collegi,
L'UNO IN ETERNO RICCO, E L'ALTRO INÒPE."

ESSAY IV.

AD VALOREM.

56

In the last paper we saw that just payment of labour consisted in a sum of money which would approximately obtain equivalent labour at a future time: we have now to examine the means of obtaining such equivalence. Which question involves the definition of Value, Wealth, Price, and Produce.

None of these terms are yet defined so as to be understood by the public. But the last, Produce, which one might have thought the clearest of all, is, in use, the most ambiguous; and the examination of the kind of ambiguity attendant on its present employment will best open the way to our work.

In his chapter on Capital,* Mr. J. S. Mill instances, as a capitalist, a hardware manufacturer, who, having intended to spend a certain portion of the proceeds of his business in buying plate and jewels, changes his mind, and "pays it as

* Book I. chap. iv. s. 1. To save space, my future references to Mr. Mill's work will be by numerals only, as in this instance; I. iv. 1. Ed. in 2 vols 8vo. Parker, 1848.

wages to additional workpeople." The effect is stated by Mr. Mill to be, that "more food is appropriated to the consumption of productive labourers."

Now, I do not ask, though, had I written this paragraph, it would surely have been asked of me, What is to become of the silversmiths? If they are truly unproductive persons, we will acquiesce in their extinction. And though in another part of the same passage, the hardware merchant is supposed also to dispense with a number of servants, whose "food is thus set free for productive purposes," I do not inquire what will be the effect, painful or otherwise, upon the servants, of this emancipation of their food. But I very seriously inquire why ironware is produce, and silverware is not? That the merchant consumes the one, and sells the other, certainly does not constitute the difference, unless it can be shown (which, indeed, I perceive it to be becoming daily more and more the aim of tradesmen to show) that commodities are made to be sold, and not to be consumed. The merchant is an agent of conveyance to the consumer in one case, and is himself the consumer in the other:* but the

* If Mr. Mill had wished to show the difference in result between consumption and sale, he should have represented the hardware merchant as consuming his own goods instead of selling them; similarly, the silver merchant as consuming his own goods instead of selling them. Had he done this, he would have made his position clearer, though less tenable;

labourers are in either case equally productive, since they have produced goods to the same value, if the hardware and the plate are both goods.

And what distinction separates them? It is indeed possible that in the "comparative estimate of the moralist," with which Mr. Mill says political economy has nothing to do (III. i. 2) a steel fork might appear a more substantial production than a silver one: we may grant also that knives, no less than forks, are good produce; and scythes and ploughshares serviceable articles. But, how of bayonets? Supposing the hardware merchant to effect large sales of *these*, by help of the "setting free" of the food of his servants and his silversmith,—is he still employing productive labourers, or, in Mr. Mill's words, labourers who increase "the stock of permanent means of enjoyment" (I. iii. 4). Or if, instead of bayonets, he supply bombs, will not the absolute and final "enjoyment" of even these energetically productive articles (each of which costs ten pounds*) be dependent on a proper

and perhaps this was the position he really intended to take, tacitly involving his theory, elsewhere stated, and shown in the sequel of this paper to be false, that demand for commodities is not demand for labour. But by the most diligent scrutiny of the paragraph now under examination, I cannot determine whether it is a fallacy pure and simple, or the half of one fallacy supported by the whole of a greater one; so that I treat it here on the kinder assumption that it is one fallacy only.

* I take Mr. Helps' estimate in his essay on War.

choice of time and place for their *enfantement*; choice, that is to say, depending on those philosophical considerations with which political economy has nothing to do? *

58 I should have regretted the need of pointing out inconsistency in any portion of Mr. Mill's work, had not the value of his work proceeded from its inconsistencies. He deserves honour among economists by inadvertently disclaiming the principles which he states, and tacitly introducing the moral considerations with which he declares his science has no connection. Many of his chapters are, therefore, true and valuable; and the only conclusions of his which I have to dispute are those which follow from his premises.

59 Thus, the idea which lies at the root of the passage we have just been examining, namely, that labour applied to produce luxuries will not support so many persons as labour applied to produce useful articles, is entirely true; but the instance given fails—and in four directions of failure at once—because Mr. Mill has not defined the real meaning of usefulness.

* Also when the wrought silver vases of Spain were dashed to fragments by our custom-house officers, because bullion might be imported free of duty, but not brains, was the axe that broke them productive?—the artist who wrought them unproductive? Or again. If the woodman's axe is productive, is the executioner's? as also, if the hemp of a cable be productive, does not the productiveness of hemp in a halter depend on its moral more than on its material application?

The definition which he has given—"capacity to satisfy a desire, or serve a purpose" (III. i. 2)—applies equally to the iron and silver; while the true definition—which he has not given, but which nevertheless underlies the false verbal definition in his mind, and comes out once or twice by accident (as in the words "any support to life or strength" in I. i. 5)—applies to some articles of iron, but not to others, and to some articles of silver, but not to others. It applies to ploughs, but not to bayonets; and to forks, but not to filigree.*

The eliciting of the true definition will give us the reply to our first question, "What is value?" respecting which, however, we must first hear the popular statements.

"The word 'value,' when used without adjunct, always means, in political economy, value in exchange" (Mill, III. i. 3). So that, if two ships cannot exchange their rudders, their rudders are, in politico-economic language, of no value to either.

But "the subject of political economy is wealth."—(Preliminary remarks, page 1.)

And wealth "consists of all useful and agreeable objects which possess exchangeable value."—(Preliminary remarks, page 10.)

It appears, then, according to Mr. Mill, that usefulness

* Filigree: that is to say, generally, ornament dependent on complexity not on art.

and agreeableness underlie the exchange value, and must be ascertained to exist in the thing, before we can esteem it an object of wealth.

Now, the economical usefulness of a thing depends not merely on its own nature, but on the number of people who can and will use it. A horse is useless, and therefore unsaleable, if no one can ride,—a sword if no one can strike, and meat, if no one can eat. Thus every material utility depends on its relative human capacity.

Similarly: The agreeableness of a thing depends not merely on its own likeableness, but on the number of people who can be got to like it. The relative agreeableness, and therefore saleableness, of "a pot of the smallest ale," and of "Adonis painted by a running brook," depends virtually on the opinion of Demos, in the shape of Christopher Sly. That is to say, the agreeableness of a thing depends on its relative human disposition.* Therefore, political economy,

* These statements sound crude in their brevity; but will be found of the utmost importance when they are developed. Thus, in the above instance, economists have never perceived that disposition to buy is a wholly *moral* element in demand: that is to say, when you give a man half-a-crown, it depends on his disposition whether he is rich or poor with it—whether he will buy disease, ruin, and hatred, or buy health, advancement, and domestic love. And thus the agreeableness or exchange value of every offered commodity depends on production, not merely of the commodity, but of buyers of it; therefore on the education of buyers

being a science of wealth, must be a science respecting human capacities and dispositions. But moral considerations have nothing to do with political economy (III. i. 2). Therefore, moral considerations have nothing to do with human capacities and dispositions.

I do not wholly like the look of this conclusion from Mr. Mill's statements:—let us try Mr. Ricardo's.

"Utility is not the measure of exchangeable value, though it is absolutely essential to it."—(Chap. I. sect. i.) Essential in what degree, Mr. Ricardo? There may be greater and less degrees of utility. Meat, for instance, may be so good as to be fit for any one to eat, or so bad as to be fit for no one to eat. What is the exact degree of goodness which is "essential" to its exchangeable value, but not "the measure" of it? How good must the meat be, in order to possess any exchangeable value; and how bad must it be—(I wish this were a settled question in London markets)—in order to possess none?

and on all the moral elements by which their disposition to buy this, or that, is formed. I will illustrate and expand into final consequences every one of these definitions in its place: at present they can only be given with extremest brevity; for in order to put the subject at once in a connected form before the reader, I have thrown into one, the opening definitions of four chapters; namely, of that on Value ("Ad Valorem"), on Price ("Thirty Pieces"); on Production ("Demeter"); and on Economy ("The Law of the House").

There appears to be some hitch, I think, in the working even of Mr. Ricardo's principles; but let him take his own example. "Suppose that in the early stages of society the bows and arrows of the hunter were of equal value with the implements of the fisherman. Under such circumstances the value of the deer, the produce of the hunter's day's labour, would be *exactly*" (italics mine) "equal to the value of the fish, the product of the fisherman's day's labour. The comparative value of the fish and game would be *entirely* regulated by the quantity of labour realized in each." (Ricardo, chap. iii. On Value.)

Indeed! Therefore, if the fisherman catches one sprat, and the huntsman one deer, one sprat will be equal in value to one deer; but if the fisherman catches no sprat, and the huntsman two deer, no sprat will be equal in value to two deer?

Nay; but—Mr. Ricardo's supporters may say—he means, on an average;—if the average product of a day's work of fisher and hunter be one fish and one deer, the one fish will always be equal in value to the one deer.

Might I inquire the species of fish. Whale? or white-bait? *

* Perhaps it may be said, in farther support of Mr. Ricardo, that he meant, "when the utility is constant or given, the price varies as the quantity of labour." If he meant this, he should have said it; but, had

It would be waste of time to pursue these fallacies farther; we will seek for a true definition.

61. Much store has been set for centuries upon the use of

he meant it, he could have hardly missed the necessary result, that utility would be one measure of price (which he expressly denies it to be); and that, to prove saleableness, he had to prove a given quantity of utility, as well as a given quantity of labour; to wit, in his own instance, that the deer and fish would each feed the same number of men, for the same number of days, with equal pleasure to their palates. The fact is, he did not know what he meant himself. The general idea which he had derived from commercial experience, without being able to analyse it, was, that when the demand is constant, the price varies as the quantity of labour required for production; or,—using the formula I gave in last paper—when y is constant, $x\,y$ varies as x. But demand never is, nor can be, ultimately constant, if x varies distinctly; for, as price rises, consumers fall away; and as soon as there is a monopoly (and all scarcity is a form of monopoly; so that every commodity is affected occasionally by some colour of monopoly), y becomes the most influential condition of the price. Thus the price of a painting depends less on its merits than on the interest taken in it by the public; the price of singing less on the labour of the singer than the number of persons who desire to hear him; and the price of gold less on the scarcity which affects it in common with cerium or iridium, than on the sun-light colour and unalterable purity by which it attracts the admiration and answers the trusts of mankind.

It must be kept in mind, however, that I use the word "demand" in a somewhat different sense from economists usually. They mean by it

our English classical education. It were to be wished that our well-educated merchants recalled to mind always this much of their Latin schooling,—that the nominative of *valorem* (a word already sufficiently familiar to them) is *valor*; a word which, therefore, ought to be familiar to them. *Valor*, from *valere*, to be well, or strong (ὑγιαίνω); —strong, *in* life (if a man), or valiant; strong, *for* life (if a thing), or valuable. To be "valuable," therefore, is to "avail towards life." A truly valuable or availing thing is that which leads to life with its whole strength. In proportion as it does not lead to life, or as its strength is broken, it is less valuable; in proportion as it leads away from life, it is unvaluable or malignant.

The value of a thing, therefore, is independent of opinion, and of quantity. Think what you will of it, gain how

"the quantity of a thing sold." I mean by it "the force of the buyer's capable intention to buy." In good English, a person's "demand" signifies, not what he gets, but what he asks for.

Economists also do not notice that objects are not valued by absolute bulk or weight, but by such bulk and weight as is necessary to bring them into use. They say, for instance, that water bears no price in the market. It is true that a cupful does not, but a lake does; just as a handful of dust does not, but an acre does. And were it possible to make even the possession of the cupful or handful permanent, (*i. e.* to find a place for them,) the earth and sea would be bought up by handfuls and cupfuls.

much you may of it, the value of the thing itself is neither greater nor less. For ever it avails, or avails not; no estimate can raise, no disdain depress, the power which it holds from the Maker of things and of men.

The real science of political economy, which has yet to be distinguished from the bastard science, as medicine from witchcraft, and astronomy from astrology, is that which teaches nations to desire and labour for the things that lead to life; and which teaches them to scorn and destroy the things that lead to destruction. And if, in a state of infancy, they suppose indifferent things, such as excrescences of shell-fish, and pieces of blue and red stone, to be valuable, and spend large measure of the labour which ought to be employed for the extension and ennobling of life, in diving or digging for them, and cutting them into various shapes,—or if, in the same state of infancy, they imagine precious and beneficent things, such as air, light, and cleanliness, to be valueless,—or if, finally, they imagine the conditions of their own existence, by which alone they can truly possess or use anything, such, for instance, as peace, trust, and love, to be prudently exchangeable, when the market offers, for gold, iron, or excrescences of shells—the great and only science of Political Economy teaches them, in all these cases, what is vanity, and what substance; and how the service of Death, the Lord of Waste, and of eternal emptiness, differs from the service of Wisdom, the Lady of

Saving, and of eternal fulness; she who has said, "I will cause those that love me to inherit SUBSTANCE; and I will FILL their treasures."

The "Lady of Saving," in a profounder sense than that of the savings' bank, though that is a good one: Madonna della Salute,—Lady of Health—which, though commonly spoken of as if separate from wealth, is indeed a part of wealth. This word, "wealth," it will be remembered, is the next we have to define.

"To be wealthy," says Mr. Mill, is "to have a large stock of useful articles."

I accept this definition. Only let us perfectly understand it. My opponents often lament my not giving them enough logic: I fear I must at present use a little more than they will like; but this business of Political Economy is no light one, and we must allow no loose terms in it.

We have, therefore, to ascertain in the above definition, first, what is the meaning of "having," or the nature of Possession. Then what is the meaning of "useful," or the nature of Utility.

And first of possession. At the crossing of the transepts of Milan Cathedral has lain, for three hundred years, the embalmed body of St. Carlo Borromeo. It holds a golden crosier, and has a cross of emeralds on its breast. Admitting the crosier and emeralds to be useful articles, is the body to be considered as "having" them? Do they, in the politico

economical sense of property, belong to it? If not, and if we may, therefore, conclude generally that a dead body cannot possess property, what degree and period of animation in the body will render possession possible?

As thus: lately in a wreck of a Californian ship, one of the passengers fastened a belt about him with two hundred pounds of gold in it, with which he was found afterwards at the bottom. Now, as he was sinking—had he the gold? or had the gold him?*

And if, instead of sinking him in the sea by its weight, the gold had struck him on the forehead, and thereby caused incurable disease—suppose palsy or insanity,—would the gold in that case have been more a "possession" than in the first? Without pressing the inquiry up through instances of gradual increasing vital power over the gold (which I will, however, give, if they are asked for), I presume the reader will see that possession, or "having," is not an absolute, but a gradated, power; and consists not only in the quantity or nature of the thing possessed, but also (and in a greater degree) in its suitableness to the person possessing it, and in his vital power to use it.

And our definition of Wealth, expanded, becomes: "The possession of useful articles, *which we can use.*" This is a very serious change. For wealth, instead of depending

* Compare GEORGE HERBERT, *The Church Porch*, Stanza 28.

merely on a "have," is thus seen to depend on a "can." Gladiator's death, on a "habet;" but soldier's victory, and state's salvation, on a "quo plurimum posset." (Liv. VII. 6.) And what we reasoned of only as accumulation of material, is seen to demand also accumulation of capacity. 63 So much for our verb. Next for our adjective. What is the meaning of "useful?"

The inquiry is closely connected with the last. For what is capable of use in the hands of some persons, is capable, in the hands of others, of the opposite of use, called commonly, "from-use or ab-use." And it depends on the person, much more than on the article, whether its usefulness or ab-usefulness will be the quality developed in it. Thus, wine, which the Greeks, in their Bacchus, made, rightly, the type of all passion, and which, when used, "cheereth god and man" (that is to say, strengthens both the divine life, or reasoning power, and the earthly, or carnal power, of man); yet, when abused, becomes "Dionusos," hurtful especially to the divine part of man, or reason. And again, the body itself, being equally liable to use and to abuse, and, when rightly disciplined, serviceable to the State, both for war and labour;—but when not disciplined, or abused, valueless to the State, and capable only of continuing the private or single existence of the individual (and that but feebly)—the Greeks called such

a body an "idiotic" or "private" body, from their word signifying a person employed in no way directly useful to the State; whence, finally, our "idiot," meaning a person entirely occupied with his own concerns.

Hence, it follows, that if a thing is to be useful, it must be not only of an availing nature, but in availing hands. Or, in accurate terms, usefulness is value in the hands of the valiant; so that this science of wealth being, as we have just seen, when regarded as the science of Accumulation, accumulative of capacity as well as of material,—when regarded as the Science of Distribution, is distribution not absolute, but discriminate; not of every thing to every man, but of the right thing to the right man. A difficult science, dependent on more than arithmetic.

64. Wealth, therefore, is "THE POSSESSION OF THE VALUABLE BY THE VALIANT;" and in considering it as a power existing in a nation, the two elements, the value of the thing, and the valour of its possessor, must be estimated together. Whence it appears that many of the persons commonly considered wealthy, are in reality no more wealthy than the locks of their own strong boxes are; they being inherently and eternally incapable of wealth; and operating for the nation, in an economical point of view, either as pools of dead water, and eddies in a stream (which, so long as the stream flows, are useless, or serve only to drown people,

but may become of importance in a state of stagnation, should the stream dry); or else, as dams in a river, of which the ultimate service depends not on the dam, but the miller; or else, as mere accidental stays and impediments, acting, not as wealth, but (for we ought to have a correspondent term) as "illth," causing various devastation and trouble around them in all directions; or lastly, act not at all, but are merely animated conditions of delay, (no use being possible of anything they have until they are dead,) in which last condition they are nevertheless often useful *as* delays, and "impedimenta," if a nation is apt to move too fast.

65 This being so, the difficulty of the true science of Political Economy lies not merely in the need of developing manly character to deal with material value, but in the fact, that while the manly character and material value only form wealth by their conjunction, they have nevertheless a mutually destructive operation on each other. For the manly character is apt to ignore, or even cast away, the material value: —whence that of Pope:—

> "Sure, of qualities demanding praise
> More go to ruin fortunes, than to raise,"

And on the other hand, the material value is apt to undermine the manly character; so that it must be our work, in the issue

to examine what evidence there is of the effect of wealth on the minds of its possessors; also, what kind of person it is who usually sets himself to obtain wealth, and succeeds in doing so; and whether the world owes more gratitude to rich or to poor men, either for their moral influence upon it, or for chief goods, discoveries, and practical advancements. I may, however, anticipate future conclusion so far as to state that in a community regulated only by laws of demand and supply, and protected from open violence, the persons who become rich are, generally speaking, industrious, resolute, proud, covetous, prompt, methodical, sensible, unimaginative, insensitive, and ignorant. The persons who remain poor are the entirely foolish, the entirely wise,* the idle, the reckless, the humble, the thoughtful, the dull, the imaginative, the sensitive, the well-informed, the improvident, the irregularly and impulsively wicked, the clumsy knave, the open thief, and the entirely merciful, just, and godly person.

Thus far then of wealth. Next, we have to ascertain the nature of PRICE; that is to say, of exchange value, and its expression by currencies.

Note first, of exchange, there can be no *profit* in it. It is only in labour there can be profit—that is to say a "making

* "ὁ Ζεὺς δῆπου πένεται."—*Arist. Plut.* 582. I would but weaken the grand words to lean on the preceding ones:—"ὅτι τοῦ Πλούτου παρέχει βελτίονας, ἄνδρας, καὶ τὴν γνώμην, καὶ τὴν ἰδέαν."

n advance," or "making in favour of" (from proficio). In exchange, there is only advantage, *i.e.* a bringing of vantage or power to the exchanging persons. Thus, one man, by sowing and reaping, turns one measure of corn into tw measures. That is Profit. Another by digging and forging turns one spade into two spades. That is Profit. But the man who has two measures of corn wants sometimes to dig; and the man who has two spades wants sometimes to eat:— They exchange the gained grain for the gained tool; and both are the better for the exchange; but though there is much advantage in the transaction, there is no profit. Nothing is constructed or produced. Only that which had been before constructed is given to the person by whom it can be used. If labour is necessary to effect the exchange, that labour is in reality involved in the production, and, like all other labour, bears profit. Whatever number of men are concerned in the manufacture, or in the conveyance, have share in the profit; but neither the manufacture nor the conveyance are the exchange, and in the exchange itself there is no profit.

There may, however, be acquisition, which is a very different thing. If, in the exchange, one man is able to give what cost him little labour for what has cost the other much, he "acquires" a certain quantity of the produce of the other's labour. And precisely w at he acquires, the other loses. In

mercantile language, the person who thus acquires is commonly said to have "made a profit;" and I believe that many of our merchants are seriously under the impression that it is possible for everybody, somehow, to make a profit in this manner. Whereas, by the unfortunate constitution of the world we live in, the laws both of matter and motion have quite rigorously forbidden universal acquisition of this kind. Profit, or material gain, is attainable only by construction or by discovery; not by exchange. Whenever material gain follows exchange, for every *plus* there is a precisely equal *minus*

Unhappily for the progress of the science of Political Economy, the plus quantities, or,—if I may be allowed to coin an awkward plural—the pluses, make a very positive and venerable appearance in the world, so that every one is eager to learn the science which produces results so magnificent; whereas the minuses have, on the other hand, a tendency to retire into back streets, and other places of shade, —or even to get themselves wholly and finally put out of sight in graves: which renders the algebra of this science peculiar, and difficultly legible: a large number of its negative signs being written by the account-keeper in a kind of red ink, which starvation thins, and makes strangely pale, or even quite invisible ink, for the present.

67 The Science of Exchange, or, as I hear it has been proposed

to call it, of "Catallactics," considered as one of gain, is, therefore, simply nugatory; but considered as one of acquisition, it is a very curious science, differing in its data and basis from every other science known. Thus:—If I can exchange a needle with a savage for a diamond, my power of doing so depends either on the savage's ignorance of social arrangements in Europe, or on his want of power to take advantage of them, by selling the diamond to any one else for more needles. If, farther, I make the bargain as completely advantageous to myself as possible, by giving to the savage a needle with no eye in it (reaching, thus, a sufficiently satisfactory type of the perfect operation of catallactic science), the advantage to me in the entire transaction depends wholly upon the ignorance, powerlessness, or heedlessness of the person dealt with. Do away with these, and catallactic advantage becomes impossible. So far, therefore, as the science of exchange relates to the advantage of one of the exchanging persons only, it is founded on the ignorance or incapacity of the opposite person. Where these vanish, it also vanishes. It is therefore a science founded on nescience, and an art founded on artlessness. But all other sciences and arts, except this, have for their object the doing away with their opposite nescience and artlessness. *This* science, alone of sciences, must, by all available means, promulgate and prolong its opposite nescience;

otherwise the science itself is impossible. It is, therefore peculiarly and alone, the science of darkness; probably a bastard science—not by any means a *divina scientia*, but one begotten of another father, that father who, advising his children to turn stones into bread, is himself employed in turning bread into stones, and who, if you ask a fish of him (fish not being producible on his estate), can but give you a serpent.

68

The general law, then, respecting just or economical exchange, is simply this:—There must be advantage on both sides (or if only advantage on one, at least no disadvantage on the other) to the persons exchanging; and just payment for his time, intelligence, and labour, to any intermediate person effecting the transaction (commonly called a merchant): and whatever advantage there is on either side, and whatever pay is given to the intermediate person, should be thoroughly known to all concerned. All attempt at concealment implies some practice of the opposite, or undivine science, founded on nescience. Whence another saying of the Jew merchant's—"As a nail between the stone joints, so doth sin stick fast between buying and selling." Which peculiar riveting of stone and timber, in men's dealings with each other, is again set forth in the house which was to be destroyed—timber and stones together—when Zechariah's roll (more probably "curved sword")

flew over it: "the curse that goeth forth over all the earth upon every one that stealeth and holdeth himself guiltless," instantly followed by the vision of the Great Measure;—the measure "of the injustice of them in all the earth" (αὕτη ἡ ἀδικία αὐτῶν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῇ), with the weight of lead for its lid, and the woman, the spirit of wickedness, within it;—that is to say, Wickedness hidden by Dulness, and formalized, outwardly, into ponderously established cruelty. "It shall be set upon its own base in the land of Babel."*

69 I have hitherto carefully restricted myself, in speaking of exchange, to the use of the term "advantage;" but that term includes two ideas; the advantage, namely, of getting what we *need*, and that of getting what we *wish* for. Three-fourths of the demands existing in the world are romantic; founded on visions, idealisms, hopes, and affections; and the regulation of the purse is, in its essence, regulation of the imagination and the heart. Hence, the right discussion of the nature of price is a very high metaphysical and physical problem; sometimes to be solved only in a passionate manner, as by David in his counting the price of the water of the well by the gate of Bethlehem; but its first conditions are the following:—The price of anything is the quantity of labour given by the person desiring it, in order to obtain possession of it. This price

* Zech. v. 11. See note on the passage, at page 120.

depends on four variable quantities. *A.* The quantity of wish the purchaser has for the thing; opposed to α, the quantity of wish the seller has to keep it. *B.* The quantity of labour the purchaser can afford, to obtain the thing; opposed to β, the quantity of labour the seller can afford, to keep it. These quantities are operative only in excess; *i. e.* the quantity of wish (*A*) means the quantity of wish for this thing, above wish for other things; and the quantity of work (*B*) means the quantity which can be spared to get this thing from the quantity needed to get other things.

Phenomena of price, therefore, are intensely complex, curious, and interesting—too complex, however, to be examined yet; every one of them, when traced far enough, showing itself at last as a part of the bargain of the Poor of the Flock (or "flock of slaughter"), "If ye think good give ME my price, and if not, forbear"—Zech. xi. 12; but as the price of everything is to be calculated finally in labour, it is necessary to define the nature of that standard.

Labour is the contest of the life of man with an opposite; —the term "life" including his intellect, soul, and physical power, contending with question, difficulty, trial, or material force.

Labour is of a higher or lower order, as it includes

more or fewer of the elements of life: and labour of good quality, in any kind, includes always as much intellect and feeling as will fully and harmoniously regulate the physical force.

In speaking of the value and price of labour, it is necessary always to understand labour of a given rank and quality, as we should speak of gold or silver of a given standard. Bad (that is, heartless, inexperienced, or senseless) labour cannot be valued; it is like gold of uncertain alloy, or flawed iron.*

The quality and kind of labour being given, its value, like that of all other valuable things, is invariable. But the quantity of it which must be given for other things is variable; and in estimating this variation, the price of other

* Labour which is entirely good of its kind, that is to say, effective, or efficient, the Greeks called "weighable," or ἄξιος, translated usually "worthy," and because thus substantial and true, they called its price τιμή, the "honourable estimate" of it (honorarium): this word being founded on their conception of true labour as a divine thing, to be honoured with the kind of honour given to the gods; whereas the price of false labour, or of that which led away from life, was to be, not honour but vengeance; for which they reserved another word, attributing the exaction of such price to a peculiar goddess, called Tisiphone, the "requiter (or quittance-taker) of death;" a person versed in the highest branches of arithmetic, and punctual in her habits; with whom accounts current have been opened also in modern days.

things must always be counted by the quantity of labour, not the price of labour by the quantity of other things.

Thus, if we want to plant an apple sapling in rocky ground, it may take two hours' work; in soft ground, perhaps only half an hour. Grant the soil equally good for the tree in each case. Then the value of the sapling planted by two hours' work is nowise greater than that of the sapling planted in half an hour. One will bear no more fruit than the other. Also, one half-hour of work is as valuable as another half-hour; nevertheless the one sapling has cost four such pieces of work, the other only one. Now the proper statement of this fact is, not that the labour on the hard ground is cheaper than on the soft; but that the tree is dearer. The exchange value may, or may not, afterwards depend on this fact. If other people have plenty of soft ground to plant in, they will take no cognizance of our two hours' labour, in the price they will offer for the plant on the rock. And if, through want of sufficient botanical science, we have planted an upas-tree instead of an apple, the exchange-value will be a negative quantity; still less proportionate to the labour expended.

What is commonly called cheapness of labour, signifies, therefore, in reality, that many obstacles have to be overcome by it; so that much labour is required to produce a small result. But this should never be spoken of as cheap

ness of labour, but as dearness of the object wrought for It would be just as rational to say that walking was cheap, because we had ten miles to walk home to our dinner, as that labour was cheap, because we had to work ten hours to earn it.

§ 2 The last word which we have to define is "Production."

I have hitherto spoken of all labour as profitable; because it is impossible to consider under one head the quality or value of labour, and its aim. But labour of the best quality may be various in aim. It may be either constructive ("gathering," from con and struo), as agriculture; nugatory, as jewel-cutting; or destructive ("scattering," from de and struo), as war. It is not, however, always easy to prove labour, apparently nugatory, to be actually so;* generally, the formula holds good: "he that gather-

* The most accurately nugatory labour is, perhaps, that of which not enough is given to answer a purpose effectually, and which, therefore, has all to be done over again. Also, labour which fails of effect through non-co-operation. The curé of a little village near Bellinzona, to whom I had expressed wonder that the peasants allowed the Ticino to flood their fields, told me that they would not join to build an effectual embankment high up the valley, because everybody said "that would help his neighbours as much as himself." So every proprietor built a bit of low embankment about his own field; and the Ticino, as soon as it had a mind, swept away and swallowed all up together.

eth not, scattereth;" thus, the jeweller's art is probably very harmful in its ministering to a clumsy and inelegant pride. So that, finally, I believe nearly all labour may be shortly divided into positive and negative labour:—positive, that which produces life; negative, that which produces death; the most directly negative labour being murder, and the most directly positive, the bearing and rearing of children; so that in the precise degree which murder is hateful, on the negative side of idleness, in that exact degree child-rearing is admirable, on the positive side of idleness. For which reason, and because of the honour that there is in rearing* children, while the wife is said to be as the vine (for cheering), the children are as the olive-branch, for praise; nor for praise only, but for peace (because large families can only be reared in times of peace): though since, in their spreading and voyaging in various directions, they distribute strength, they are, to the home strength,

* Observe, I say, "rearing," not "begetting." The praise is in the seventh season, not in σπορητός, nor in φυταλιὰ, but in ὁπώρα. It is strange that men always praise enthusiastically any person who, by a momentary exertion, saves a life; but praise very hesitatingly a person who, by exertion and self-denial prolonged through years, creates one. We give the crown "ob civem servatum;"—why not "ob civem natum?" Born, I mean, to the full, in soul as well as body. England has oak enough, I think, for both chaplets.

as arrows in the hand of a giant—striking here and there, far away.

Labour being thus various in its result, the prosperity of any nation is in exact proportion to the quantity of labour which it spends in obtaining and employing means of life. Observe,—I say, obtaining and employing; that is to say, not merely wisely producing, but wisely distributing and consuming. Economists usually speak as if there were no good in consumption absolute.* So far from this being so, consumption absolute is the end, crown, and perfection of production; and wise consumption is a far more difficult art than wise production. Twenty people can gain money for one who can use it; and the vital question, for individual and for nation, is, never "how much do they make?" but "to what purpose do they spend?"

The reader may, perhaps, have been surprised at the slight reference I have hitherto made "to capital," and its functions. It is here the place to define them.

Capital signifies "head, or source, or root material"—it is material by which some derivative or secondary good, is produced. It is only capital proper (caput vivum, not caput mortuum) when it is thus producing something

* When Mr. Mill speaks of productive consumption, he only means consumption which results in increase of capital, or material wealth. See I. iii. 4, and I. iii. 5.

different from itself. It is a root, which does not enter into vital function till it produces something else than a root; namely, fruit. That fruit will in time again produce roots; and so all living capital issues in reproduction of capital; but capital which produces nothing but capital is only root producing root; bulb issuing in bulb, never in tulip; seed issuing in seed, never in bread. The Political Economy of Europe has hitherto devoted itself wholly to the multiplication, or (less even) the aggregation, of bulbs. It never saw nor conceived such a thing as a tulip. Nay, boiled bulbs they might have been—glass bulbs—Prince Rupert's drops, consummated in powder (well, if it were glass-powder and not gunpowder), for any end or meaning the economists had in defining the laws of aggregation. We will try and get a clearer notion of them.

The best and simplest general type of capital is a well-made ploughshare. Now, if that ploughshare did nothing but beget other ploughshares, in a polypous manner,—however the great cluster of polypous plough might glitter in the sun, it would have lost its function of capital. It becomes true capital only by another kind of splendour,—when it is seen "splendescere sulco," to grow bright in the furrow; rather with diminution of its substance, than addition, by the noble friction. And the true home question, to every capitalist and to every nation, is not, "how many ploughs

have you?"—but, "where are your furrows?" not—"how quickly will this capital reproduce itself?"—but, "what will it do during reproduction?" What substance will it furnish, good for life? what work construct, protective of life? if none, its own reproduction is useless—if worse than none,—(for capital may destroy life as well as support it), its own reproduction is worse than useless; it is merely an advance from Tisiphone, on mortgage—not a profit by any means.

74 Not a profit, as the ancients truly saw, and showed in the type of Ixion; for capital is the head, or fountain head, of wealth—the "well-head" of wealth, as the clouds are the well-heads of rain: but when clouds are without water, and only beget clouds, they issue in wrath at last, instead of rain, and in lightning instead of harvest; whence Ixion is said first to have invited his guests to a banquet, and then made them fall into a pit filled with fire; which is the type of the temptation of riches issuing in imprisoned torment.—torment in a pit, (as also Demas' silver mine,) after which, to show the rage of riches passing from lust of pleasure to lust of power, yet power not truly understood, Ixion is said to have desired Juno, and instead, embracing a cloud (or phantasm), to have begotten the Centaurs; the power of mere wealth being, in itself, as the embrace of a shadow,—comfortless, (so also "Ephraim feedeth on wind and followeth after the east wind; or "that which is not"—

Prov. xxiii. 5; and again Dante's Geryon, the type of avaricious fraud, as he flies, gathers the *air* up with retractile claws,—" l'aer a se raccolse,"*) but in its offspring, a mingling of the brutal with the human nature: human in sagacity—using both intellect and arrow; but brutal in its body and hoof, for consuming and trampling down. For which sin Ixion is at last bound upon a wheel—fiery and toothed, and rolling perpetually in the air;—the type of human labour when selfish and fruitless (kept far into the middle ages in their wheel of fortune); the wheel which has in it no breath or spirit, but is whirled by chance only; whereas of all true work the Ezekiel vision is true, that the spirit of the living

* So also in the vision of the women bearing the ephah, before quoted, "the wind was in their wings," not wings "of a stork," as in our version; but "*milvi*," of a kite, in the Vulgate, or perhaps more accurately still in the Septuagint, "hoopoe," a bird connected typically with the power of riches by many traditions, of which that of its petition for a crest of gold is perhaps the most interesting. The "Birds" of Aristophanes, in which its part is principal, are full of them; note especially the "fortification of the air with baked bricks, like Babylon," l. 550; and, again, compare the Plutus of Dante, who (to show the influence of riches in destroying the reason) is the only one of the powers of the Inferno who cannot speak intelligibly; and also the cowardliest; he is not merely quelled or restrained, but literally "collapses" at a word; the sudden and helpless operation of mercantile panic being all told in the brief metaphor "as the sails, swollen with the wind, fall, when the mast breaks."

creature is in the wheels, and where the angels go, the wheels go by them; but move no otherwise.

75 This being the real nature of capital, it follows that there are two kinds of true production, always going on in an active State; one of seed, and one of food or production for the Ground, and for the Mouth; both of which are by covetous persons thought to be production only for the granary; whereas the function of the granary is but intermediate and conservative, fulfilled in distribution; else it ends in nothing but mildew, and nourishment of rats and worms. And since production for the Ground is only useful with future hope of harvest, all *essential* production is for the Mouth; and is finally measured by the mouth; hence, as I said above, consumption is the crown of production; and the wealth of a nation is only to be estimated by what it consumes.

The want of any clear sight of this fact is the capital error, issuing in rich interest and revenue of error, among the political economists. Their minds are continually set on money-gain, not on mouth gain; and they fall into every sort of net and snare, dazzled by the coin-glitter as birds by the fowler's glass; or rather (for there is not much else like birds in them) they are like children trying to jump on the heads of their own shadows; the money-gain being only the shadow of the true gain, which is humanity.

76 The final object of political economy, therefore, is to get

good method of consumption, and great quantity of consumption: in other words, to use everything, and to use it nobly; whether it be substance, service, or service perfecting substance. The most curious error in Mr. Mill's entire work (provided for him originally by Ricardo), is his endeavour to distinguish between direct and indirect service, and consequent assertion that a demand for commodities is not demand for labour (I. v. 9, *et seq.*) He distinguishes between labourers employed to lay out pleasure grounds, and to manufacture velvet; declaring that it makes material difference to the labouring classes in which of these two ways a capitalist spends his money; because the employment of the gardeners is a demand for labour, but the purchase of velvet is not.* Error colossal as well as strange. It will, indeed,

* The value of raw material, which has, indeed, to be deducted from the price of the labour, is not contemplated in the passages referred to, Mr. Mill having fallen into the mistake solely by pursuing the collateral results of the payment of wages to middlemen. He says—"The consumer does not, with his own funds, pay the weaver for his day's work." Pardon me; the consumer of the velvet pays the weaver with his own funds as much as he pays the gardener. He pays, probably, an intermediate ship-owner, velvet merchant, and shopman; pays carriage money, shop rent, damage money time money, and care money; all these are above and beside the velvet price (just as the wages of a head gardener would be above the grass price) but the velvet is as much produced by the consumer's capital, though he does not pay for it till six months after production as the grass

make a difference to the labourer whether he bid him swing his scythe in the spring winds, or drive the loom in pestilential air; but, so far as his pocket is concerned, it makes to him absolutely no difference whether we order him to make green velvet, with seed and a scythe, or red velvet, with silk and scissors. Neither does it anywise concern him whether, when the velvet is made, we consume it by walking on it, or wearing it, so long as our consumption of it is wholly selfish. But if our consumption is to be in anywise unselfish, not only our mode of consuming the articles we require interests him, but also the *kind* of article we require with a view to consumption. As thus (returning for a moment to Mr. Mill's great hardware theory*): it matters, so far as the labourer's immediate profit is concerned, not an iron filing whether I employ him in growing a peach, or forging a bombshell; but my probable mode of consumption of those articles matters seriously. Admit that it is to be in both cases "unselfish,"

is produced by his capital, though he does not pay the man who mowed and rolled it on Monday, till Saturday afternoon. I do not know if Mr. Mill's conclusion,—"the capital cannot be dispensed with, the purchasers can" (p. 98), has yet been reduced to practice in the City on any large scale.

* Which, observe, is the precise opposite of the one under examination. The hardware theory required us to discharge our gardeners and engage manufacturers; the velvet theory requires us to discharge our manufacturers and engage gardeners.

and the difference, to him, is final, whether when his child is ill, I walk it into his cottage and give it the peach, or drop the shell down his chimney, and blow his roof off.

The worst of it, for the peasant, is, that the capitalist's consumption of the peach is apt to be selfish, and of the shell, distributive;* but, in all cases, this is the broad and general fact, that on due catallactic commercial principles,

* It is one very awful form of the operation of wealth in Europe that it is entirely capitalists' wealth which supports unjust wars. Just wars do not need so much money to support them; for most of the men who wage such, wage them gratis; but for an unjust war, men's bodies and souls have both to be bought; and the best tools of war for them besides; which makes such war costly to the maximum; not to speak of the cost of base fear, and angry suspicion, between nations which have not grace nor honesty enough in all their multitudes to buy an hour's peace of mind with: as, at present, France and England, purchasing of each other ten millions sterling worth of consternation annually, (a remarkably light crop, half thorns and half aspen leaves,—sown, reaped, and granaried by the "science" of the modern political economist, teaching covetousness instead of truth.) And all unjust war being supportable, if not by pillage of the enemy, only by loans from capitalists, these loans are repaid by subsequent taxation of the people, who appear to have no will in the matter, the capitalists' will being the primary root of the war; but its real root is the covetousness of the whole nation, rendering it incapable of faith, frankness, or justice, and bringing about, therefore, in due time, his own separate loss and punishment to each person.

somebody's roof must go off in fulfilment of the bomb's destiny. You may grow for your neighbour, at your liking, grapes or grapeshot; he will also, catallactically, grow grapes or grapeshot for you, and you will each reap what you have sown.

77 It is, therefore, the manner and issue of consumption which are the real tests of production. Production does not consist in things laboriously made, but in things serviceably consumable; and the question for the nation is not how much labour it employs, but how much life it produces. For as consumption is the end and aim of production, so life is the end and aim of consumption.

I left this question to the reader's thought two months ago, choosing rather that he should work it out for himself than have it sharply stated to him. But now, the ground being sufficiently broken (and the details into which the several questions, here opened, must lead us, being too complex for discussion in the pages of a periodical, so that I must pursue them elsewhere), I desire, in closing the series of introductory papers, to leave this one great fact clearly stated. THERE IS NO WEALTH BUT LIFE. Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life

to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others.

A strange political economy; the only one, nevertheless, that ever was or can be: all political economy founded on self-interest* being but the fulfilment of that which once brought schism into the Policy of angels, and ruin into the Economy of Heaven.

"The greatest number of human beings noble and happy." But is the nobleness consistent with the number? Yes, not only consistent with it, but essential to it. The maximum of life can only be reached by the maximum of virtue. In this respect the law of human population differs wholly from that of animal life. The multiplication of animals is checked only by want of food, and by the hostility of races; the population of the gnat is restrained by the hunger of the swallow, and that of the swallow by the scarcity of gnats. Man, considered as an animal, is indeed limited by the same laws; hunger, or plague, or war, are the necessary and only restraints upon his increase,—effectual restraints hitherto,—his principal study having been how most swiftly to destroy himself, or ravage his dwelling places, and his highest skill directed to give range to the

* "In all reasoning about prices, the proviso must be understood 'supposing all parties to take care of their own interest.'"—Mill, III. i. 5

famine, seed to the plague, and sway to the sword. But, considered as other than an animal, his increase is not limited by these laws. It is limited only by the limits of his courage and his love. Both of these *have* their bounds; and ought to have: his race has its bounds also; but these have not yet been reached, nor will be reached for ages.

79. In all the ranges of human thought I know none so melancholy as the speculations of political economists on the population question. It is proposed to better the condition of the labourer by giving him higher wages. "Nay," says the economist, "if you raise his wages, he will either people down to the same point of misery at which you found him, or drink your wages away." He will. I know it. Who gave him this will? Suppose it were your own son of whom you spoke, declaring to me that you dared not take him into your firm, nor even give him his just labourer's wages, because if you did, he would die of drunkenness, and leave half a score of children to the parish. "Who gave your son these dispositions?"—I should inquire. Has he them by inheritance or by education? By one or other they *must* come; and as in him, so also in the poor. Either these poor are of a race essentially different from ours, and unredeemable (which, however often implied, I have heard none yet openly say), or else by such care as

we have ourselves received, we may make them contment and sober as ourselves—wise and dispassionate as we are—models arduous of imitation. "But," it is answered, "they cannot receive education." Why not? That is precisely the point at issue. Charitable persons suppose the worst fault of the rich is to refuse the people meat; and the people cry for their meat, kept back by fraud, to the Lord of Multitudes.* Alas! it is not meat of which the refusal is cruelest, or to which the claim is validest. The

* James v. 4. Observe, in these statements I am not taking up, nor countenancing one whit, the common socialist idea of division of property; division of property is its destruction; and with it the destruction of all hope, all industry, and all justice: it is simply chaos—a chaos towards which the believers in modern political economy are fast tending, and from which I am striving to save them. The rich man does not keep back meat from the poor by retaining his riches; but by basely using them. Riches are a form of strength; and a strong man does not injure others by keeping his strength, but by using it injuriously. The socialist, seeing a strong man oppress a weak one, cries out—"Break the strong man's arms;" but I say, "Teach him to use them to better purpose." The fortitude and intelligence which acquire riches are intended, by the Giver of both, not to scatter, nor to give away, but to employ those riches in the service of mankind; in other words, in the redemption of the erring and aid of the weak—that is to say, there is first to be the work to gain money; then the Sabbath of use for it—the Sabbath, whose law is, not to lose life, but to save. It is continually the fault of the

life is more than the meat. The rich not only refuse food to the poor; they refuse wisdom; they refuse virtue; they refuse salvation. Ye sheep without shepherd, it is not the pasture that has been shut from you, but the presence. Meat! perhaps your right to that may be pleadable; but other rights have to be pleaded first. Claim your crumbs from the table, if you will; but claim them as children, not as dogs; claim your right to be fed, but claim more loudly your right to be holy, perfect, and pure.

Strange words to be used of working people: "What! holy; without any long robes nor anointing oils; these rough-jacketed, rough-worded persons; set to nameless and dishonoured service? Perfect!—these, with dim eyes and cramped limbs, and slowly wakening minds? Pure—these, with sensual desire and grovelling thought; foul of body, and coarse of soul?" It may be so; nevertheless, such as they are, they are the holiest, perfectest, purest persons

folly of the poor that they are poor, as it is usually a child's fault if it falls into a pond, and a cripple's weakness that slips at a crossing; nevertheless, most passers-by would pull the child out, or help up the cripple. Put it at the worst, that all the poor of the world are but disobedient children, or careless cripples, and that all rich people are wise and strong, and you will see at once that neither is the socialist right in desiring to make everybody poor, powerless, and foolish as he is himself, nor the rich man right in leaving the children in the mire.

the earth can at present show. They may be what you have said; but if so, they yet are holier than we, who have left them thus.

But what can be done for them? Who can clothe—who teach—who restrain their multitudes? What end can there be for them at last, but to consume one another?

I hope for another end, though not, indeed, from any of the three remedies for over-population commonly suggested by economists.

These three are, in brief—Colonization; Bringing in of waste lands; or Discouragement of Marriage.

The first and second of these expedients merely evade or delay the question. It will, indeed, be long before the world has been all colonized, and its deserts all brought under cultivation. But the radical question is not how much habitable land is in the world, but how many human beings ought to be maintained on a given space of habitable land.

Observe, I say, *ought* to be, not how many *can* be. Ricardo, with his usual inaccuracy, defines what he calls the "natural rate of wages" as "that which will maintain the labourer." Maintain him! yes; but how?—the question was instantly thus asked of me by a working girl, to whom I read the passage. I will amplify her question for her. "Maintain him, how?" As first, to what length of life?

Out of a given number of fed persons how many are to be old—how many young; that is to say, will you arrange their maintenance so as to kill them early—say at thirty or thirty-five on the average, including deaths of weakly or ill-fed children?—or so as to enable them to live out a natural life? You will feed a greater number, in the first case,* by rapidity of succession; probably a happier number in the second: which does Mr. Ricardo mean to be their natural state, and to which state belongs the natural rate of wages?

Again: A piece of land which will only support ten idle, ignorant, and improvident persons, will support thirty or forty intelligent and industrious ones. Which of these is their natural state, and to which of them belongs the natural rate of wages?

Again: If a piece of land support forty persons in industrious ignorance; and if, tired of this ignorance, they set apart ten of their number to study the properties of cones, and the sizes of stars; the labour of these ten, being withdrawn from the ground, must either tend to the increase of food in some transitional manner, or the persons set apart for siderial and conic purposes must starve, or some one else starve instead of them. What is, therefore, the

* The quantity of life is the same in both cases; but it is differently allotted.

rate natural of wages of the scientific persons, and how does this rate relate to, or measure, their reverted or transitional productiveness?

Again: If the ground maintains, at first, forty labourers in a peaceable and pious state of mind, but they become in a few years so quarrelsome and impious that they have to set apart five, to meditate upon and settle their disputes;—ten, armed to the teeth with costly instruments, to enforce the decisions; and five to remind everybody in an eloquent manner of the existence of a God;—what will be the result upon the general power of production, and what is the "natural rate of wages" of the meditative, muscular, and oracular labourers?

Leaving these questions to be discussed, or waived, at their pleasure, by Mr. Ricardo's followers, I proceed to state the main facts bearing on that probable future of the labouring classes which has been partially glanced at by Mr. Mill. That chapter and the preceding one differ from the common writing of political economists in admitting some value in the aspect of nature, and expressing regret at the probability of the destruction of natural scenery. But we may spare our anxieties on this head. Men can neither drink steam, nor eat stone. The maximum of population on a given space of land implies also the relative maximum of edible vegetable, whether for men or cattle; it implies a

maximum of pure air; and of pure water. Therefore: a maximum of wood, to transmute the air, and of sloping ground, protected by herbage from the extreme heat of the sun, to feed the streams. All England may, if it so chooses, become one manufacturing town; and Englishmen, sacrificing themselves to the good of general humanity, may live diminished lives in the midst of noise, of darkness, and of deadly exhalation. But the world cannot become a factory, nor a mine. No amount of ingenuity will ever make iron digestible by the million, nor substitute hydrogen for wine. Neither the avarice nor the rage of men will ever feed them, and however the apple of Sodom and the grape of Gomorrah may spread their table for a time with dainties of ashes, and nectar of asps,—so long as men live by bread, the far away valleys must laugh as they are covered with the gold of God, and the shouts of His happy multitudes ring round the wine-press and the well.

89 Nor need our more sentimental economists fear the too wide spread of the formalities of a mechanical agriculture. The presence of a wise population implies the search for felicity as well as for food; nor can any population reach its maximum but through that wisdom which "rejoices" in the habitable parts of the earth. The desert has its appointed place and work; the eternal engine, whose beam is the earth's axle, whose beat is its year, and whose breath is its ocean,

will still divide imperiously to their desert kingdoms, bound with unfurrowable rock, and swept by unarrested sand, their powers of frost and fire : but the zones and lands between, habitable, will be loveliest in habitation. The desire of the heart is also the light of the eyes. No scene is continually and untiringly loved, but one rich by joyful human labour; smooth in field, fair in garden ; full in orchard ; trim, sweet, and frequent in homestead ; ringing with voices of vivid existence. No air is sweet that is silent ; it is only sweet when full of low currents of under sound—triplets of birds, and murmur and chirp of insects, and deep-toned words of men, and wayward trebles of childhood. As the art of life is learned, it will be found at last that all lovely things are also necessary :—the wild flower by the wayside, as well as the tended corn ; and the wild birds and creatures of the forest, as well as the tended cattle ; because man doth not live by bread only, but also by the desert manna ; by every wondrous word and unknowable work of God. Happy, in that he knew them not, nor did his fathers know ; and that round about him reaches yet into the infinite, the amazement of his existence.

Note, finally, that all effectual advancement towards this true felicity of the human race must be by individual, not public effort. Certain general measures may aid, certain revised laws guide, such advancement ; but the measure and

law which have first to be determined are those of each man's home. We continually hear it recommended by sagacious people to complaining neighbours (usually less well placed in the world than themselves), that they should "remain content in the station in which Providence has placed them." There are perhaps some circumstances of life in which Providence has no intention that people *should* be content. Nevertheless, the maxim is on the whole a good one; but it is peculiarly for home use. That your neighbour should, or should not, remain content with *his* position, is not your business; but it is very much your business to remain content with your own. What is chiefly needed in England at the present day is to show the quantity of pleasure that may be obtained by a consistent, well-administered competence, modest, confessed, and laborious. We need examples of people who, leaving Heaven to decide whether they are to rise in the world, decide for themselves that they will be happy in it, and have resolved to seek—not greater wealth, but simpler pleasure; not higher fortune, but deeper felicity; making the first of possessions, self-possession; and honouring themselves in the harmless pride and calm pursuits of peace.

Of which lowly peace it is written that "justice and peace have kissed each other;" and that the fruit of justice is "sown in peace of them that make peace;" not "peace

makers" in the common understanding—reconcilers of quarrels; (though that function also follows on the greater one;) but peace-Creators; Givers of Calm. Which you cannot give, unless you first gain; nor is this gain one which will follow assuredly on any course of business, commonly so called. No form of gain is less probable, business being (as is shown in the language of all nations—πωλεῖν from πέλω, πρᾶσις from περάω, venire, vendre, and venal, from venio, &c.) essentially restless—and probably contentious;—having a raven-like mind to the motion to and fro, as to the carrion food; whereas the olive-feeding and bearing birds look for rest for their feet: thus it is said of Wisdom that she "hath builded her house, and hewn out her seven pillars;" and even when, though apt to wait long at the doorposts, she has to leave her house and go abroad, her paths are peace also.

For us, at all events, her work must begin at the entry of the doors: all true economy is "Law of the house." Strive to make that law strict, simple, generous: waste nothing, and grudge nothing. Care in nowise to make more of money, but care to make much of it; remembering always the great, palpable, inevitable fact—the rule and root of all economy—that what one person has, another cannot have; and that every atom of substance, of whatever kind, used or consumed, is so much human life spent, which, if it issue in the saving present life, or gaining

more, is well spent, but if not, is either so much life prevented, or so much slain. In all buying, consider, first, what condition of existence you cause in the producers of what you buy; secondly, whether the sum you have paid is just to the producer, and in due proportion, lodged in his hands;* thirdly, to how much clear use, for food, knowledge, or joy, this that you have bought can be put; and fourthly, to whom and in what way it can be most speedily and serviceably distributed: in all dealings whatsoever insisting on entire openness and stern fulfilment; and in all doings, on perfection and loveliness of accomplishment; especially on fineness and purity of all marketable commodity: watching at the same time for all ways of gaining, or teaching, powers of simple pleasure; and of showing "ὅσον ἐν ἀσφοδέλῳ γέγ' ὄνειαρ"—the sum of enjoyment depending not on the quantity of things tasted, but on the vivacity and patience of taste.

* The proper offices of middle-men, namely, overseers (or authoritative workmen), conveyancers (merchants, sailors, retail dealers, &c.), and orderers (persons employed to receive directions from the consumer), must, of course, be examined before I can enter farther into the question of just payment of the first producer. But I have not spoken of them in these introductory papers, because the evils attendant on the abuse of such intermediate functions result not from any alleged principle of modern political economy, but from private carelessness or iniquity.

And if, on due and honest thought over these things, it seems that the kind of existence to which men are now summoned by every plea of pity and claim of right, may, for some time at least, not be a luxurious one;—consider whether, even supposing it guiltless, luxury would be desired by any of us, if we saw clearly at our sides the suffering which accompanies it in the world. Luxury is indeed possible in the future—innocent and exquisite; luxury for all, and by the help of all: but luxury at present can only be enjoyed by the ignorant; the cruelest man living could not sit at his feast, unless he sat blindfold. Raise the veil boldly; face the light; and if, as yet, the light of the eye can only be through tears, and the light of the body through sackcloth, go thou forth weeping, bearing precious seed, until the time come, and the kingdom, when Christ's gift of bread and bequest of peace shall be Unto this last as unto thee; and when, for earth's severed multitudes of the wicked and the weary, there shall be holier reconciliation than that of the narrow home, and calm economy, where the wicked cease—not from trouble, but from troubling—and the Weary are at rest.

THE END

MUNERA PULVERIS

Six Essays

ON THE

ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

BY

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PREFACE.

THE following pages contain, I believe, the first accurate analysis of the laws of Political Economy which has been published in England. Many treatises, within their scope, correct, have appeared in contradiction of the views popularly received; but no exhaustive examination of the subject was possible to any person unacquainted with the value of the products of the highest industries, commonly called the "Fine Arts;" and no one acquainted with the nature of those industries has, so far as I know, attempted, or even approached, the task.

So that, to the date (1863) when these Essays were published, not only the chief conditions of the production of wealth had remained unstated, but the nature of wealth itself had never been defined. "Every one has a notion, sufficiently correct for common purposes, of what is meant by wealth," wrote Mr. Mill, in the outset of his treatise: and contentedly proceeded, as if a chemist should proceed to investigate the laws of chemistry without endeavouring

to ascertain the nature of fire or water, because every one had a notion of them, "sufficiently correct for common purposes."

But even that apparently indisputable statement was untrue. There is not one person in ten thousand who has a notion sufficiently correct, even for the commonest purposes, of "what is meant" by wealth; still less of what wealth everlastingly *is*, whether we mean it or not; which it is the business of every student of economy to ascertain. We, indeed, know (either by experience or in imagination) what it is to be able to provide ourselves with luxurious food, and handsome clothes; and if Mr. Mill had thought that wealth consisted only in these, or in the means of obtaining these, it would have been easy for him to have so defined it with perfect scientific accuracy. But he knew better: he knew that some kinds of wealth consisted in the possession, or power of obtaining, other things than these; but, having, in the studies of his life, no clue to the principles of essential value, he was compelled to take public opinion as the ground of his science; and the public, of course, willingly accepted the notion of a science founded on their opinions.

I had, on the contrary, a singular advantage, not only in the greater extent of the field of investigation opened

to me by my daily pursuits, but in the severity of some lessons I accidentally received in the course of them.

When, in the winter of 1851, I was collecting materials for my work on Venetian architecture, three of the pictures of Tintoret on the roof of the School of St. Roch were hanging down in ragged fragments, mixed with lath and plaster, round the apertures made by the fall of three Austrian heavy shot. The city of Venice was not, it appeared, rich enough to repair the damage that winter; and buckets were set on the floor of the upper room of the school to catch the rain, which not only fell directly through the shot holes, but found its way, owing to the generally pervious state of the roof, through many of the canvasses of Tintoret's in other parts of the ceiling.

It was a lesson to me, as I have just said, no less direct than severe; for I knew already at that time (though I have not ventured to assert, until recently at Oxford,) that the pictures of Tintoret in Venice were accurately the most precious articles of wealth in Europe, being the best existing productions of human industry. Now at the time that three of them were thus fluttering in moist rags from the roof they had adorned, the shops of the Rue Rivoli at Paris were, in obedience to a

steadily-increasing public Demand, beginning to show a steadily-increasing Supply of elaborately-finished and coloured lithographs, representing the modern dances of delight, among which the cancan has since taken a distinguished place.

The labour employed on the stone of one of these lithographs is very much more than Tintoret was in the habit of giving to a picture of average size. Considering labour as the origin of value, therefore, the stone so highly wrought would be of greater value than the picture; and since also it is capable of producing a large number of immediately saleable or exchangeable impressions, for which the "demand" is constant, the city of Paris naturally supposed itself, and on all hitherto believed or stated principles of political economy, was, infinitely richer in the possession of a large number of these lithographic stones, (not to speak of countless oil pictures and marble carvings of similar character), than Venice in the possession of those rags of mildewed canvas, flaunting in the south wind and its salt rain. And, accordingly, Paris provided (without thought of the expense) lofty arcades of shops, and rich recesses of innumerable private apartments, for the protection of these better treasures of hers from the weather.

Yet, all the while, Paris was not the richer for these possessions. Intrinsically, the delightful lithographs were not wealth, but polar contraries of wealth. She was, by the exact quantity of labour she had given to produce these, sunk below, instead of above, absolute Poverty. They not only were false Riches—they were true *Debt*, which had to be paid at last—and the present aspect of the Rue Rivoli shows in what manner.

And the faded stains of the Venetian ceiling, all the while, were absolute and inestimable wealth. Useless to their possessors as forgotten treasure in a buried city, they had in them, nevertheless, the intrinsic and eternal nature of wealth; and Venice, still possessing the ruins of them, was a rich city; only, the Venetians had *not* a notion sufficiently correct even for the very common purpose of inducing them to put slates on a roof, of what was "meant by wealth."

The vulgar economist would reply that his science had nothing to do with the qualities of pictures, but with their exchange-value only; and that his business was, exclusively, to consider whether the remains of Tintoret were worth as many ten-and-sixpences as the impressions which might be taken from the lithographic stones.

But he would not venture, without reserve, to make such an answer, if the example be taken in horses, instead of pictures. The most dull economist would perceive, and admit, that a gentleman who had a fine stud of horses was absolutely richer than one who had only ill-bred and broken-winded ones. He would instinctively feel, though his pseudo-science had never taught him, that the price paid for the animals, in either case, did not alter the fact of their worth: that the good horse, though it might have been bought by chance for a few guineas, was not therefore less valuable, nor the owner of the galled jade any the richer, because he had given a hundred for it.

So that the economist, in saying that his science takes no account of the qualities of pictures, merely signifies that he cannot conceive of any quality of essential badness or goodness existing in pictures; and that he is incapable of investigating the laws of wealth in such articles. Which is the fact. But, being incapable of defining intrinsic value in pictures, it follows that he must be equally helpless to define the nature of intrinsic value in painted glass, or in painted pottery, or in patterned stuffs, or in any other national produce requiring true human ingenuity. Nay, though capable of con

ceiving the idea of intrinsic value with respect to beasts of burden, no economist has endeavoured to state the general principles of National Economy, even with regard to the horse or the ass. And, in fine, *the modern political economists have been, without exception, incapable of apprehending the nature of intrinsic value at all.*

And the first specialty of the following treatise consists in its giving at the outset, and maintaining as the foundation of all subsequent reasoning, a definition of Intrinsic Value, and Intrinsic Contrary-of-Value; the negative power having been left by former writers entirely out of account, and the positive power left entirely undefined.

But, secondly: the modern economist, ignoring intrinsic value, and accepting the popular estimate of things as the only ground of his science, has imagined himself to have ascertained the constant laws regulating the relation of this popular demand to its supply; or, at least, to have proved that demand and supply were connected by heavenly balance, over which human foresight had no power. I chanced, by singular coincidence, lately to see this theory of the law of demand and supply brought to as sharp practical issue in another great siege, as I had seen the theories of intrinsic value brought, in the siege of Venice.

I had the honour of being on the committee under the presidentship of the Lord Mayor of London, for the victualling of Paris after her surrender. It became, at one period of our sittings, a question of vital importance at what moment the law of demand and supply would come into operation, and what the operation of it would exactly be: the demand, on this occasion, being very urgent indeed; that of several millions of people within a few hours of utter starvation, for any kind of food whatsoever. Nevertheless, it was admitted, in the course of debate, to be probable that the divine principle of demand and supply might find itself at the eleventh hour, and some minutes over, in want of carts and horses; and we ventured so far to interfere with the divine principle as to provide carts and horses, with haste which proved, happily, in time for the need; but not a moment in advance of it. It was farther recognized by the committee that the divine principle of demand and supply would commence its operations by charging the poor of Paris twelve-pence for a penny's worth of whatever they wanted; and would end its operations by offering them twelve-pence worth for a penny, of whatever they didn't want. Whereupon it was concluded by the committee that the tiny knot, on this special occasion, was scarcely "*dignus vindice*," by the divine princi

ple of demand and supply: and that we would venture, for once, in a profane manner, to provide for the poor of Paris what they wanted, when they wanted it. Which, to the value of the sums entrusted to us, it will be remembered we succeeded in doing.

But the fact is that the so-called "law," which was felt to be false in this case of extreme exigence, is alike false in cases of less exigence. It is false always, and everywhere. Nay, to such an extent is its existence imaginary, that the vulgar economists are not even agreed in their account of it; for some of them mean by it, only that prices are regulated by the relation between demand and supply, which is partly true; and others mean that the relation itself is one with the process of which it is unwise to interfere; a statement which is not only, as in the above instance, untrue; but accurately the reverse of the truth: for all wise economy, political or domestic, consists in the resolved maintenance of a given relation between supply and demand, other than the instinctive, or (directly) natural, one.

Similarly, vulgar political economy asserts for a "law" that wages are determined by competition.

Now I pay my servants exactly what wages I think necessary to make them comfortable. The sum is not

determined at all by competition; but sometimes by my notions of their comfort and deserving, and sometimes by theirs. If I were to become penniless to-morrow, several of them would certainly still serve me for nothing.

In both the real and supposed cases the so-called "law" of vulgar political economy is absolutely set at defiance. But I cannot set the law of gravitation at defiance, nor determine that in my house I will not allow ice to melt, when the temperature is above thirty-two degrees. A true law outside of my house, will remain a true one inside of it. It is not, therefore, a law of Nature that wages are determined by competition. Still less is it a law of State, or we should not now be disputing about it publicly, to the loss of many millions of pounds to the country. The fact which vulgar economists have been weak enough to imagine a law, is only that, for the last twenty years a number of very senseless persons have attempted to determine wages in that manner; and have, in a measure, succeeded in occasionally doing so.

Both in definition of the elements of wealth, and in statement of the laws which govern its distribution, modern political economy has been thus absolutely incompetent, or absolutely false. And the following treatise

is not, as it has been asserted with dull pertinacity, an endeavour to put sentiment in the place of science; but it contains the exposure of what insolently pretended to be a science; and the definition, hitherto unassailed—and I do not fear to assert, unassailable—of the material elements with which political economy has to deal, and the moral principles in which it consists; being not itself a science, but "a system of conduct founded on the sciences, and impossible, except under certain conditions of moral culture." Which is only to say, that industry, frugality, and discretion, the three foundations of economy, are moral qualities, and cannot be attained without moral discipline: a flat truism, the reader may think, thus stated, yet a truism which is denied both vociferously, and in all endeavour, by the entire populace of Europe; who are at present hopeful of obtaining wealth by tricks of trade, without industry; who, possessing wealth, have lost in the use of it even the conception,—how much more the habit?—of frugality; and who, in the choice of the elements of wealth, cannot so much as lose —since they have never hitherto at any time possessed,—the faculty of discretion.

Now if the teachers of the pseudo-science of economy had ventured to state distinctly even the poor conclusions

they had reached on the subjects respecting which it is most dangerous for a populace to be indiscreet, they would have soon found, by the use made of them, which were true, and which false.

But on main and vital questions, no political economist has hitherto ventured to state one guiding principle. I will instance three subjects of universal importance. National Dress. National Rent. National Debt.

Now if we are to look in any quarter for a systematic and exhaustive statement of the principles of a given science, it must certainly be from its Professor at Cambridge.

Take the last edition of Professor Fawcett's *Manual of Political Economy*, and forming, first clearly in your mind these three following questions, see if you can find an answer to them.

I. Does expenditure of capital on the production of luxurious dress and furniture tend to make a nation rich or poor?

II. Does the payment, by the nation, of a tax on its land, or on the produce of it, to a certain number of private persons, to be expended by them as they please, tend to make the nation rich or poor?

III. Does the payment, by the nation, for an indefinite

period, of interest on money borrowed from private persons, tend to make the nation rich or poor?

These three questions are, all of them, perfectly simple, and primarily vital. Determine these, and you have at once a basis for national conduct in all important particulars. Leave them undetermined, and there is no limit to the distress which may be brought upon the people by the cunning of its knaves, and the folly of its multitudes.

I will take the three in their order.

I. Dress. The general impression on the public mind at this day is, that the luxury of the rich in dress and furniture is a benefit to the poor. Probably not even the blindest of our political economists would venture to assert this in so many words. But where do they assert the contrary? During the entire period of the reign of the late Emperor it was assumed in France, as the first principle of fiscal government, that a large portion of the funds received as rent from the provincial labourer should be expended in the manufacture of ladies' dresses in Paris. Where is the political economist in France, or England, who ventured to assert the conclusions of his science as adverse to this system? As early as the year 1857 I had done my best to show the nature of the error,

and to give warning of its danger;* but not one of the men who had the foolish ears of the people intent on their words, dared to follow me in speaking what would have been an offence to the powers of trade; and the powers of trade in Paris had their full way for fourteen years more —with this result, to-day,—as told us in precise and curt terms by the Minister of Public Instruction,—†

"We have replaced glory by gold, work by speculation, faith and honour by scepticism. To absolve or glorify immorality; to make much of loose women; to gratify our eyes with luxury, our ears with the tales of orgies; to aid in the manœuvres of public robbers, or to applaud them; to laugh at morality, and only believe in success; to love nothing but pleasure, adore nothing but force; to replace work with a fecundity of fancies; to speak without thinking; to prefer noise to glory; to erect sneering into a system, and lying into an institution—is this the spectacle that we have seen?—is this the society that we have been?"

Of course, other causes, besides the desire of luxury in furniture and dress, have been at work to produce such consequences; but the most active cause of all has been the passion for these; passion unrebuked by the clergy, and, for the most part, provoked by economists, as advantageous to commerce; nor need we think that such results have been arrived at in France only; we are ourselves fol-

* *Political Economy of Art.* (Smith and Elder, 1857, pp. 65-76.)

† See report of speech of M. Jules Simon, in *Pall Mall Gazette* of October 27, 1871.

lowing rapidly on the same road. France, in her old wars with us, never was so fatally our enemy as she has been in the fellowship of fashion, and the freedom of trade: nor, to my mind, is any fact recorded of Assyrian or Roman luxury more ominous, or ghastly, than one which came to my knowledge a few weeks ago, in England; a respectable and well-to-do father and mother, in a quiet north country town, being turned into the streets in their old age, at the suit of their only daughter's milliner.

II. Rent. The following account of the real nature of rent is given, quite accurately, by Professor Fawcett, at page 112 of the last edition of his *Political Economy*:—

"Every country has probably been subjugated, and grants of vanquished territory were the ordinary rewards which the conquering chief bestowed upon his more distinguished followers. Lands obtained by force had to be defended by force; and before law had asserted her supremacy, and property was made secure, no baron was able to retain his possessions, unless those who lived on his estates were prepared to defend them. . . .* As property became secure, and landlords felt that the power of the State would protect them in all the rights of property, every vestige of these feudal tenures was abolished, and the relation between landlord and tenant has thus become purely commercial. A landlord offers his land to any one who is willing to take it; he is anxious to receive the highest rent he can obtain. What are the principles which regulate the rent which may thus be paid?'

* The omitted sentences merely amplify the statement; they in no wise modify it.

These principles the Professor goes on contentedly to investigate, never appearing to contemplate for an instant the possibility of the first principle in the whole business —the maintenance, by force, of the possession of land obtained by force, being ever called in question by any human mind. It is, nevertheless, the nearest task of our day to discover how far original theft may be justly encountered by reactionary theft, or whether reactionary theft be indeed theft at all; and farther, what, excluding either original or corrective theft, are the just conditions of the possession of land.

III. Debt. Long since, when, a mere boy, I used to sit silently listening to the conversation of the London merchants who, all of them good and sound men of business, were wont occasionally to meet round my father's dining-table; nothing used to surprise me more than the conviction openly expressed by some of the soundest and most cautious of them, that "if there were no National debt they would not know what to do with their money, or where to place it safely." At the 399th page of his Manual, you will find Professor Fawcett giving exactly the same statement.

"In our own country, this certainty against risk of loss is provided by the public funds;"

and again, as on the question of rent, the Professor proceeds, without appearing for an instant to be troubled by any misgiving that there may be an essential difference between the effects on national prosperity of a Government paying interest on money which it spent in fire works fifty years ago, and of a Government paying interest on money to be employed to-day on productive labour.

That difference, which the reader will find stated and examined at length, in §§ 127–129 of this volume, it is the business of economists, before approaching any other question relating to government, fully to explain. And the paragraphs to which I refer, contain, I believe, the only definite statement of it hitherto made.

The practical result of the absence of any such statement is, that capitalists, when they do not know what to do with their money, persuade the peasants, in various countries, that the said peasants want guns to shoot each other with. The peasants accordingly borrow guns, out of the manufacture of which the capitalists get a percentage, and men of science much amusement and credit. Then the peasants shoot a certain number of each other, until they get tired; and burn each other's homes down in various places. Then they put the guns back into

towers, arsenals, &c., in ornamental patterns; (and the victorious party put also some ragged flags in churches). And then the capitalists tax both, annually, ever afterwards, to pay interest on the loan of the guns and gunpowder. And that is what capitalists call "knowing what to do with their money;" and what commercial men in general call "practical" as opposed to "sentimental" Political Economy.

Eleven years ago, in the summer of 1860, perceiving then fully, (as Carlyle had done long before), what distress was about to come on the said populace of Europe through these errors of their teachers, I began to do the best I might, to combat them, in the series of papers for the *Cornhill Magazine*, since published under the title of *Unto this Last*. The editor of the Magazine was my friend, and ventured the insertion of the three first essays; but the outcry against them became then too strong for any editor to endure, and he wrote to me, with great discomfort to himself, and many apologies to me, that the Magazine must only admit one Economical Essay more.

I made, with his permission, the last one longer than the rest, and gave it blunt conclusion as well as I could—and so the book now stands; but, as I had taken not a

little pains with the Essays, and knew that they contained better work than most of my former writings, and more important truths than all of them put together, this violent reprobation of them by the *Cornhill* public set me still more gravely thinking; and, after turning the matter hither and thither in my mind for two years more, I resolved to make it the central work of my life to write an exhaustive treatise on Political Economy. It would not have been begun, at that time, however, had not the editor of *Fraser's Magazine* written to me, saying that he believed there was something in my theories, and would risk the admission of what I chose to write on this dangerous subject; whereupon, cautiously, and at intervals, during the winter of 1862–63, I sent him, and he ventured to print, the preface of the intended work, divided into four chapters. Then, though the Editor had not wholly lost courage, the Publisher indignantly interfered; and the readers of *Fraser*, as those of the *Cornhill*, were protected, for that time, from farther disturbance on my part. Subsequently, loss of health, family distress, and various untoward chances, prevented my proceeding with the body of the book;—seven years have passed ineffectually; and I am now fain to reprint the Preface by itself, under the title which I intended for the whole.

Not discontentedly; being, at this time of life, resigned to the sense of failure; and also, because the preface is complete in itself as a body of definitions, which I now require for reference in the course of my *Letters to Workmen;* by which also, in time, I trust less formally to accomplish the chief purpose of *Munera Pulveris*, practically summed in the two paragraphs 27 and 28: namely, to examine the moral results and possible rectifications of the laws of distribution of wealth, which have prevailed hitherto without debate among men. Laws which ordinary economists assume to be inviolable, and which ordinary socialists imagine to be on the eve of total abrogation. But they are both alike deceived. The laws which at present regulate the possession of wealth are unjust, because the motives which provoke to its attainment are impure; but no socialism can effect their abrogation, unless it can abrogate also covetousness and pride, which it is by no means yet in the way of doing. Nor can the change be, in any case, to the extent that has been imagined. Extremes of luxury may be forbidden, and agony of penury relieved; but nature intends, and the utmost efforts of socialism will not hinder the fulfilment of her intention, that a provident person shall always be richer than a spendthrift; and an ingenious one more comforta-

ble than a fool. But, indeed, the adjustment of the possession of the products of industry depends more on their nature than their quantity, and on wise determination therefore of the aims of industry. A nation which desires true wealth, desires it moderately, and can therefore distribute it with kindness, and possess it with pleasure; but one which desires false wealth, desires it immoderately, and can neither dispense it with justice, nor enjoy it in peace.

Therefore, needing, constantly in my present work, to refer to the definitions of true and false wealth given in the following Essays, I republish them with careful revisal. They were written abroad; partly at Milan, partly during a winter residence on the south-eastern slope of the Mont Saléve, near Geneva; and sent to London in as legible MS. as I could write; but I never revised the press sheets, and have been obliged, accordingly, now to amend the text here and there, or correct it in unimportant particulars. Wherever any modification has involved change in the sense, it is enclosed in square brackets; and what few explanatory comments I have felt it necessary to add, have been indicated in the same manner. No explanatory comments, I regret to perceive, will suffice to remedy the mischief of my affected concentration of language, into

the habit of which I fell by thinking too long over particular passages, in many and many a solitary walk towards the mountains of Bonneville or Annecy. But I never intended the book for anything else than a dictionary of reference, and that for earnest readers; who will, I have good hope, if they find what they want in it, forgive the affectedly curt expressions.

The Essays, as originally published, were, as I have just stated, four in number. I have now, more conveniently, divided the whole into six chapters; and (as I purpose throughout this edition of my works) numbered the paragraphs.

I inscribed the first volume of this series to the friend who aided me in chief sorrow. Let me inscribe the second to the friend and guide who has urged me to all chief labour, THOMAS CARLYLE.

I would that some better means were in my power of showing reverence to the man who alone, of all our masters of literature, has written, without thought of himself, what he knew it to be needful for the people of his time to hear, if the will to hear were in them: whom, therefore, as the time draws near when his task must be ended, Republican and Free-thoughted England assaults with impa-

tient reproach; and out of the abyss of her cowardice in policy and dishonour in trade, sets the hacks of her literature to speak evil, grateful to her ears, of the Solitary Teacher who has asked her to be brave for the help of Man, and just, for the love of God.

Denmark Hill,
25th November, 1871.

MUNERA PULVERIS.

"Te maris et terræ numeroque carentis arenæ
Mensorem cohibent, Archyta,
Pulveris exigui prope litus parva Matinum
Munera."

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITIONS.

1. As domestic economy regulates the acts and habits of a household, Political economy regulates those of a society or State, with reference to the means of its maintenance.

Political economy is neither an art nor a science; but a system of conduct and legislature, founded on the sciences, directing the arts, and impossible, except under certain conditions of moral culture.

2. The study which lately in England has been called Political Economy is in reality nothing more than the investigation of some accidental phenomena of modern commercial operations, nor has it been true in its investigation even of these. It has no connection whatever with political economy, as understood and treated of by the

great thinkers of past ages; and as long as its unscholarly and undefined statements are allowed to pass under the same name, every word written on the subject by those thinkers—and chiefly the words of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero and Bacon—must be nearly useless to mankind. The reader must not, therefore, be surprised at the care and insistance with which I have retained the literal and earliest sense of all important terms used in these papers; for a word is usually well made at the time it is first wanted; its youngest meaning has in it the full strength of its youth; subsequent senses are commonly warped or weakened; and as all careful thinkers are sure to have used their words accurately, the first condition, in order to be able to avail ourselves of their sayings at all, is firm definition of terms.

3. By the "maintenance" of a State is to be understood the support of its population in healthy and happy life; and the increase of their numbers, so far as that increase is consistent with their happiness. It is not the object of political economy to increase the numbers of a nation at the cost of common health or comfort; nor to increase indefinitely the comfort of individuals, by sacrifice of surrounding lives, or possibilities of life.

4. The assumption which lies at the root of nearly all erroneous reasoning on political economy,—namely, that its object is to accumulate money or exchangeable property,—may be shown in a few words to be without foundation. For no economist would admit national economy

to be legitimate which proposed to itself only the building of a pyramid of gold. He would declare the gold to be wasted, were it to remain in the monumental form, and would say it ought to be employed. But to what end? Either it must be used only to gain more gold, and build a larger pyramid, or for some purpose other than the gaining of gold. And this other purpose, however at first apprehended, will be found to resolve itself finally into the service of man;—that is to say, the extension, defence, or comfort of his life. The golden pyramid may perhaps be providently built, perhaps improvidently; but the wisdom or folly of the accumulation can only be determined by our having first clearly stated the aim of all economy, namely, the extension of life.

If the accumulation of money, or of exchangeable property, were a certain means of extending existence, it would be useless, in discussing economical questions, to fix our attention upon the more distant object—life—instead of the immediate one—money. But it is not so. Money may sometimes be accumulated at the cost of life, or by limitations of it; that is to say, either by hastening the deaths of men, or preventing their births. It is therefore necessary to keep clearly in view the ultimate object of economy; and to determine the expediency of minor operations with reference to that ulterior end.

5. It has been just stated that the object of political economy is the continuance not only of life, but of healthy and happy life. But all true happiness is both a conse-

quence and cause of life: it is a sign of its vigor, and source of its continuance. All true suffering is in like manner a consequence and cause of death. I shall therefore, in future, use the word "Life" singly: but let it be understood to include in its signification the happiness and power of the entire human nature, body and soul.

6. That human nature, as its Creator made it, and maintains it wherever His laws are observed, is entirely harmonious. No physical error can be more profound, no moral error more dangerous, than that involved in the monkish doctrine of the opposition of body to soul. No soul can be perfect in an imperfect body: no body perfect without perfect soul. Every right action and true thought sets the seal of its beauty on person and face; every wrong action and foul thought its seal of distortion; and the various aspects of humanity might be read as plainly as a printed history, were it not that the impressions are so complex that it must always in some cases (and, in the present state of our knowledge, in all cases) be impossible to decipher them completely. Nevertheless, the face of a consistently just, and of a consistently unjust person, may always be rightly distinguished at a glance; and if the qualities are continued by descent through a generation or two, there arises a complete distinction of race. Both moral and physical qualities are communicated by descent, far more than they can be developed by education; (though both may be destroyed by want of education), and there is as yet no ascertained limit to the

nobleness of person and mind which the human creature may attain, by persevering observance of the laws of God respecting its birth and training.

7. We must therefore yet farther define the aim of political economy to be "The multiplication of human life at the highest standard." It might at first seem questionable whether we should endeavour to maintain a small number of persons of the highest type of beauty and intelligence, or a larger number of an inferior class. But I shall be able to show in the sequel, that the way to maintain the largest number is first to aim at the highest standard. Determine the noblest type of man, and aim simply at maintaining the largest possible number of persons of that class, and it will be found that the largest possible number of every healthy subordinate class must necessarily be produced also.

8. The perfect type of manhood, as just stated, involves the perfections (whatever we may hereafter determine these to be) of his body, affections, and intelligence. The material things, therefore, which it is the object of political economy to produce and use, (or accumulate for use,) are things which serve either to sustain and comfort the body, or exercise rightly the affections and form the intelligence.* Whatever truly serves either of these purposes is "useful" to man, wholesome, healthful, helpful, or holy. By seeking such things, man prolongs and increases his life upon the earth.

* *See* Appendix I.

On the other hand, whatever does not serve either of these purposes,—much more whatever counteracts them,—is in like manner useless to man, unwholesome, unhelpful, or unholy; and by seeking such things man shortens and diminishes his life upon the earth.

9. And neither with respect to things useful or useless can man's estimate of them alter their nature. Certain substances being good for his food, and others noxious to him, what he thinks or wishes respecting them can neither change, nor prevent, their power. If he eats corn, he will live; if nightshade, he will die. If he produce or make good and beautiful things, they will *Re-Create* him; (note the solemnity and weight of the word); if bad and ugly things, they will "corrupt" or "break in pieces"—that is, in the exact degree of their power, Kill him. For every hour of labour, however enthusiastic or well intended, which he spends for that which is not bread, so much possibility of life is lost to him. His fancies, likings, beliefs, however brilliant, eager, or obstinate, are of no avail if they are set on a false object. Of all that he has laboured for, the eternal law of heaven and earth measures out to him for reward, to the utmost atom, that part which he ought to have laboured for, and withdraws from him (or enforces on him, it may be) inexorably, that part which he ought not to have laboured for until, on his summer threshing-floor, stands his heap of corn; little or much, not according to his labour, but to his discretion. No "commercial arrangements," no painting of surfaces, nor

alloying of substances, will avail him a pennyweight. Nature asks of him calmly and inevitably, What have you found, or formed—the right thing or the wrong? By the right thing you shall live; by the wrong you shall die.

10. To thoughtless persons it seems otherwise. The world looks to them as if they could cozen it out of some ways and means of life. But they cannot cozen IT: they can only cozen their neighbours. The world is not to be cheated of a grain; not so much as a breath of its air can be drawn surreptitiously. For every piece of wise work done, so much life is granted; for every piece of foolish work, nothing; for every piece of wicked work, so much death is allotted. This is as sure as the courses of day and night. But when the means of life are once produced, men, by their various struggles and industries of accumulation or exchange, may variously gather, waste, restrain, or distribute them; necessitating, in proportion to the waste or restraint, accurately, so much more death. The rate and range of additional death are measured by the rate and range of waste; and are inevitable;—the only question (determined mostly by fraud in peace, and force in war) is, Who is to die, and how?

11. Such being the everlasting law of human existence, the essential work of the political economist is to determine what are in reality useful or life-giving things, and by what degrees and kinds of labour they are attainable and distributable. This investigation divides itself under three great heads;—the studies, namely, of the phe-

nomena, first, of WEALTH; secondly, of MONEY; and thirdly, of RICHES.

These terms are often used as synonymous, but they signify entirely different things. "Wealth" consists of things in themselves valuable; "Money," of documentary claims to the possession of such things; and "Riches" is a relative term, expressing the magnitude of the possessions of one person or society as compared with those of other persons or societies.

The study of Wealth is a province of natural science:—it deals with the essential properties of things.

The study of Money is a province of commercial science:—it deals with conditions of engagement and exchange.

The study of Riches is a province of moral science:—it deals with the due relations of men to each other in regard of material possessions; and with the just laws of their association for purposes of labour.

I shall in this first chapter shortly sketch out the range of subjects which will come before us as we follow these three branches of inquiry.

12. And first of WEALTH, which, it has been said, consists of things essentially valuable. We now, therefore, need a definition of "value."

"Value" signifies the strength, or "availing" of anything towards the sustaining of life, and is always twofold; that is to say, primarily, INTRINSIC, and secondarily

The reader must, by anticipation, be warned against confusing value with cost, or with price. *Value is the life-giving power of anything; cost, the quantity of labour required to produce it; price, the quantity of labour which its possessor will take in exchange for it.** Cost and price are commercial conditions, to be studied under the head of money.

13. Intrinsic value is the absolute power of anything to support life. A sheaf of wheat of given quality and weight has in it a measurable power of sustaining the substance of the body; a cubic foot of pure air, a fixed power of sustaining its warmth; and a cluster of flowers of given beauty a fixed power of enlivening or animating the senses and heart.

It does not in the least affect the intrinsic value of the wheat, the air, or the flowers, that men refuse or despise them. Used or not, their own power is in them, and that particular power is in nothing else.

14. But in order that this value of theirs may become effectual, a certain state is necessary in the recipient of it. The digesting, breathing, and perceiving functions must be perfect in the human creature before the food, air, or flowers can become of their full value to it. *The production of effectual value, therefore, always involves two needs: first, the production of a thing essentially useful; then the production of the capacity to use it.* Where the

[* Observe these definitions,—they are of much importance,—and connect with them the sentences in italics on this and the next page.]

intrinsic value and acceptant capacity come together there is Effectual value, or wealth; where there is either no intrinsic value, or no acceptant capacity, there is no effectual value; that is to say, no wealth. A horse is no wealth to us if we cannot ride, nor a picture if we cannot see, *nor can any noble thing be wealth, except to a noble person.* As the aptness of the user increases, the effectual value of the thing used increases; and in its entirety can co-exist only with perfect skill of use, and fitness of nature.

15. Valuable material things may be conveniently referred to five heads:

(i.) Land, with its associated air, water, and organisms.

(ii.) Houses, furniture, and instruments.

(iii.) Stored or prepared food, medicine, and articles of bodily luxury, including clothing.

(iv.) Books.

(v.) Works of art.

The conditions of value in these things are briefly as follows:—

16. (i.) Land. Its value is twofold; first, as producing food and mechanical power; secondly, as an object of sight and thought, producing intellectual power.

Its value, as a means of producing food and mechanical power, varies with its form (as mountain or plain), with its substance (in soil or mineral contents), and with its climate. All these conditions of intrinsic value must be known and complied with by the men who have to deal

with it, in order to give effectual value; but at any given time and place, the intrinsic value is fixed: such and such a piece of land, with its associated lakes and seas, rightly treated in surface and substance, can produce precisely so much food and power, and no more.

The second element of value in land being its beauty, united with such conditions of space and form as are necessary for exercise, and for fullness of animal life, land of the highest value in these respects will be that lying in temperate climates, and boldly varied in form; removed from unhealthy or dangerous influences (as of miasm or volcano); and capable of sustaining a rich fauna and flora. Such land, carefully tended by the hand of man, so far as to remove from it unsightlinesses and evidences of decay, guarded from violence, and inhabited, under man's affectionate protection, by every kind of living creature that can occupy it in peace, is the most precious "property" that human beings can possess.

17. (ii.) Buildings, furniture, and instruments.

The value of buildings consists, first, in permanent strength, with convenience of form, of size, and of position; so as to render employment peaceful, social intercourse easy, temperature and air healthy. The advisable or possible magnitude of cities and mode of their distribution in squares, streets, courts, &c.; the relative value of sites of land, and the modes of structure which are healthiest and most permanent, have to be studied under this head.

The value of buildings consists secondly in historical association, and architectural beauty, of which we have to examine the influence on manners and life.

The value of instruments consists, first, in their power of shortening labour, or otherwise accomplishing what human strength unaided could not. The kinds of work which are severally best accomplished by hand or by machine;—the effect of machinery in gathering and multiplying population, and its influence on the minds and bodies of such population; together with the conceivable uses of machinery on a colossal scale in accomplishing mighty and useful works, hitherto unthought of, such as the deepening of large river channels;—changing the surface of mountainous districts;—irrigating tracts of desert in the torrid zone;—breaking up, and thus rendering capable of quicker fusion, edges of ice in the northern and southern Arctic seas, &c., so rendering parts of the earth habitable which hitherto have been lifeless, are to be studied under this head.

The value of instruments is, secondarily, in their aid to abstract sciences. The degree in which the multiplication of such instruments should be encouraged, so as to make them, if large, easy of access to numbers (as costly telescopes), or so cheap as that they might, in a serviceable form, become a common part of the furniture of households, is to be considered under this head.*

[* I cannot now recast these sentences, pedantic in their generalization, and intended more for index than statement, but I must guard

18. (iii.) Food, medicine, and articles of luxury. Under this head we shall have to examine the possible methods of obtaining pure food in such security and equality of supply as to avoid both waste and famine: then the economy of medicine and just range of sanitary law: finally the economy of luxury, partly an æsthetic and partly an ethical question.

19. (iv.) Books. The value of these consists,

First, in their power of preserving and communicating the knowledge of facts.

Secondly, in their power of exciting vital or noble emotion and intellectual action. They have also their corresponding negative powers of disguising and effacing the memory of facts, and killing the noble emotions, or exciting base ones. Under these two heads we have to consider the economical and educational value, positive and negative, of literature;—the means of producing and educating good authors, and the means and advisability of rendering good books generally accessible, and directing the reader's choice to them.

20. (v.) Works of art. The value of these is of the same nature as that of books; but the laws of their production and possible modes of distribution are very different, and require separate examination.

the reader from thinking that I ever wish for cheapness by bad quality. A poor boy need not always learn mathematics; but, if you set him to do so, have the farther kindness to give him good compasses, not cheap ones, whose points bend like lead.]

21. II.—Money. Under this head, we shall have to examine the laws of currency and exchange; of which I will note here the first principles.

Money has been inaccurately spoken of as merely a means of exchange. But it is far more than this. It is a documentary expression of legal claim. It is not wealth, but a documentary claim to wealth, being the sign of the relative quantities of it, or of the labour producing it, to which, at a given time, persons, or societies, are entitled.

If all the money in the world, notes and gold, were destroyed in an instant, it would leave the world neither richer nor poorer than it was. But it would leave the individual inhabitants of it in different relations.

Money is, therefore, correspondent in its nature to the title-deed of an estate. Though the deed be burned, the estate still exists, but the right to it has become disputable.

22. The real worth of money remains unchanged, as long as the proportion of the quantity of existing money to the quantity of existing wealth or available labour remains unchanged.

If the wealth increases, but not the money, the worth of the money increases; if the money increases, but not the wealth, the worth of the money diminishes.

23. Money, therefore, cannot be arbitrarily multiplied, any more than title-deeds can. So long as the existing wealth or available labour is not fully represented by the currency, the currency may be increased without diminution of the assigned worth of its pieces. But when the

existing wealth, or available labour is once fully represented, every piece of money thrown into circulation diminishes the worth of every other existing piece, in the proportion it bears to the number of them, provided the new piece be received with equal credit; if not, the depreciation of worth takes place, according to the degree of its credit.

24. When, however, new money, composed of some substance of supposed intrinsic value (as of gold), is brought into the market, or when new notes are issued which are supposed to be deserving of credit, the desire to obtain the money will, under certain circumstances, stimulate industry: an additional quantity of wealth is immediately produced, and if this be in proportion to the new claims advanced, the value of the existing currency is undepreciated. If the stimulus given be so great as to produce more goods than are proportioned to the additional coinage, the worth of the existing currency will be raised.

Arbitrary control and issues of currency affect the production of wealth, by acting on the hopes and fears of men, and are, under certain circumstances, wise. But the issue of additional currency to meet the exigencies of immediate expense, is merely one of the disguised forms of borrowing or taxing. It is, however, in the present low state of economical knowledge, often possible for governments to venture on an issue of currency, when they could not venture on an additional loan or tax, because

the real operation of such issue is not understood by the people, and the pressure of it is irregularly distributed, and with an unperceived gradation.

25. The use of substances of intrinsic value as the materials of a currency, is a barbarism;—a remnant of the conditions of barter, which alone render commerce possible among savage nations. It is, however, still necessary, partly as a mechanical check on arbitrary issues; partly as a means of exchanges with foreign nations. In proportion to the extension of civilization, and increase of trustworthiness in Governments, it will cease. So long as it exists, the phenomena of the cost and price of the articles used for currency are mingled with those proper to currency itself, in an almost inextricable manner: and the market worth of bullion is affected by multitudinous accidental circumstances, which have been traced, with more or less success, by writers on commercial operations: but with these variations the true political economist has no more to do than an engineer, fortifying a harbour of refuge against Atlantic tide, has to concern himself with the cries or quarrels of children who dig pools with their fingers for its streams among the sand.

26. III.—Riches. According to the various industry, capacity, good fortune, and desires of men, they obtain greater or smaller share of, and claim upon, the wealth of the world.

The inequalities between these shares, always in some degree just and necessary, may be either restrained by

law or circumstance within certain limits; or may increase indefinitely.

Where no moral or legal restraint is put upon the exercise of the will and intellect of the stronger, shrewder, or more covetous men, these differences become ultimately enormous. But as soon as they become so distinct in their extremes as that, on one side, there shall be manifest redundance of possession, and on the other manifest pressure of need,—the terms "riches" and "poverty" are used to express the opposite states; being contrary only as the terms "warmth" and "cold" are contraries, of which neither implies an actual degree, but only a relation to other degrees, of temperature.

27. Respecting riches, the economist has to inquire, first, into the advisable modes of their collection; secondly, into the advisable modes of their administration.

Respecting the collection of national riches, he has to inquire, first, whether he is justified in calling the nation rich, if the quantity of wealth it possesses relatively to the wealth of other nations, be large; irrespectively of the manner of its distribution. Or does the mode of distribution in any wise affect the nature of the riches? Thus, if the king alone be rich—suppose Crœsus or Mausolus—are the Lydians or Carians therefore a rich nation? Or if a few slave-masters are rich, and the nation is otherwise composed of slaves, is it to be called a rich nation? For if not, and the ideas of a certain mode of distribution or operation in the riches, and of a certain degree of free-

dom in the people, enter into our idea of riches as attributed to a people, we shall have to define the degree of fluency, or circulative character which is essential to the nature of common wealth; and the degree of independence of action required in its possessors. Questions which look as if they would take time in answering.*

28. And farther. Since the inequality, which is the condition of riches, may be established in two opposite modes—namely, by increase of possession on the one side, and by decrease of it on the other—we have to inquire, with respect to any given state of riches, precisely in what manner the correlative poverty was produced: that is to say, whether by being surpassed only, or being depressed also; and if by being depressed, what are the advantages, or the contrary, conceivable in the depression. For instance, it being one of the commonest advantages of being rich to entertain a number of servants, we have to inquire, on the one side, what economical process produced the riches of the master; and on the other, what economical process produced the poverty of the persons who serve him; and what advantages each, on his own side, derives from the result.

29. These being the main questions touching the col-

[* I regret the ironical manner in which this passage, one of great importance in the matter of it, was written. The gist of it is, that the first of all inquiries respecting the wealth of any nation is not, how much it has; but whether it is in a form that can be used, and in the possession of persons who can use it.]

lection of riches, the next, or last, part of the inquiry is into their administration.

Their possession involves three great economical powers which require separate examination: namely, the powers of selection, direction, and provision.

The power of SELECTION relates to things of which the supply is limited (as the supply of best things is always). When it becomes matter of question to whom such things are to belong, the richest person has necessarily the first choice, unless some arbitrary mode of distribution be otherwise determined upon. The business of the economist is to show how this choice may be a wise one.

The power of DIRECTION arises out of the necessary relation of rich men to poor, which ultimately, in one way or another, involves the direction of, or authority over, the labour of the poor; and this nearly as much over their mental as their bodily labour. The business of the economist is to show how this direction may be a Just one.

The power of PROVISION is dependent upon the redundance of wealth, which may of course by active persons be made available in preparation for future work or future profit; in which function riches have generally received the name of capital; that is to say, of head-, or source-material. The business of the economist is to show how this provision may be a Distant one.

30. The examination of these three functions of riches will embrace every final problem of political economy;—

and, above, or before all, this curious and vital problem, —whether, since the wholesome action of riches in these three functions will depend (it appears), on the Wisdom, Justice, and Farsightedness of the holders; and it is by no means to be assumed that persons primarily rich, must therefore be just and wise,—it may not be ultimately possible so, or somewhat so, to arrange matters, as that persons primarily just and wise, should therefore be rich?

Such being the general plan of the inquiry before us, I shall not limit myself to any consecutive following of it, having hardly any good hope of being able to complete so laborious a work as it must prove to me; but from time to time, as I have leisure, shall endeavour to carry forward this part or that, as may be immediately possible; indicating always with accuracy the place which the particular essay will or should take in the completed system.

CHAPTER II.

STORE-KEEPING.

31. The first chapter having consisted of little more than definition of terms, I purpose, in this, to expand and illustrate the given definitions.

The view which has here been taken of the nature of wealth, namely, that it consists in an intrinsic value developed by a vital power, is directly opposed to two nearly universal conceptions of wealth. In the assertion that value is primarily intrinsic, it opposes the idea that anything which is an object of desire to numbers, and is limited in quantity, so as to have rated worth in exchange, may be called, or virtually become, wealth. And in the assertion that value is, secondarily, dependent upon power in the possessor, it opposes the idea that the worth of things depends on the demand for them, instead of on the use of them. Before going farther, we will make these two positions clearer.

32. I. First. All wealth is intrinsic, and is not constituted by the judgment of men. This is easily seen in the case of things affecting the body; we know, that no force of fantasy will make stones nourishing, or poison innocent; but it is less apparent in things affecting the

mind. We are easily—perhaps willingly—misled by the appearance of beneficial results obtained by industries addressed wholly to the gratification of fanciful desire; and apt to suppose that whatever is widely coveted, dearly bought, and pleasurable in possession, must be included in our definition of wealth. It is the more difficult to quit ourselves of this error because many things which are true wealth in moderate use, become false wealth in immoderate; and many things are mixed of good and evil,—as mostly, books, and works of art,—out of which one person will get the good, and another the evil; so that it seems as if there were no fixed good or evil in the things themselves, but only in the view taken, and use made of them.

But that is not so. The evil and good are fixed; in essence, and in proportion. And in things in which evil depends upon excess, the point of excess, though indefinable, is fixed; and the power of the thing is on the hither side for good, and on the farther side for evil. And in all cases this power is inherent, not dependent on opinion or choice. Our thoughts of things neither make, nor mar their eternal force; nor—which is the most serious point for future consideration—can they prevent the effect of it (within certain limits) upon ourselves.

33. Therefore, the object of any special analysis of wealth will be not so much to enumerate what is serviceable, as to distinguish what is destructive; and to show

that it is inevitably destructive; that to receive pleasure from an evil thing is not to escape from, or alter the evil of it, but to be *altered by* it; that is, to suffer from it to the utmost, having our own nature, in that degree, made evil also. And it may be shown farther, that, through whatever length of time or subtleties of connexion the harm is accomplished, (being also less or more according to the fineness and worth of the humanity on which it is wrought), still, nothing *but* harm ever comes of a bad thing.

34. So that, in sum, the term wealth is never to be attached to the *accidental object of a morbid* desire, but only to the *constant object of a legitimate one.** By the fury of ignorance, and fitfulness of caprice, large interests may be continually attached to things unserviceable or hurtful; if their nature could be altered by our passions, the science of Political Economy would remain, what it has been hitherto among us, the weighing of clouds, and the portioning out of shadows. But of ignorance there is no science; and of caprice no law. Their disturbing forces interfere with the operations of faithful Economy, but have nothing in common with them: she, the calm arbiter of national destiny, regards only essential power for good in all that she accumulates, and alike dis-

[* Remember carefully this statement, that Wealth consists only in the things which the nature of humanity has rendered in all ages, and must render in all ages to come, (that is what I meant by "constant"), the objects of legitimate desire. And see Appendix II.]

dains the wanderings* of imagination, and the thirsts of disease.

35. II. Secondly. The assertion that wealth is not *only* intrinsic, but dependent, in order to become effectual, on a given degree of vital power in its possessor, is opposed to another popular view of wealth;—namely, that though it may always be constituted by caprice, it is, when so constituted, a substantial thing, of which given quantities may be counted as existing here, or there, and exchangeable at rated prices.

In this view there are three errors. The first and chief is the overlooking the fact that all exchangeableness of commodity, or effective demand for it, depends on the sum of capacity for its use existing, here or elsewhere. The book we cannot read, or picture we take no delight in, may indeed be called part of our wealth, in so far as we have power of exchanging either for something we like better. But our power of effecting such exchange, and yet more, of effecting it to advantage, depends absolutely on the number of accessible persons who can understand the book, or enjoy the painting, and who will dispute the possession of them. Thus the actual worth of either, even to us, depends no more on their essential goodness than on the capacity existing somewhere for the perception of it; and it is vain in any completed system of production to think of obtaining one without the other.

[* The *Wanderings*, observe, not the Right goings, of Imagination. She is very far from despising these.]

So that, though the true political economist knows that co-existence of capacity for use with temporary possession cannot be always secured, the final fact, on which he bases all action and administration, is that, in the whole nation, or group of nations, he has to deal with, for every atom of intrinsic value produced he must with exactest chemistry produce its twin atom of acceptant digestion, or understanding capacity; or, in the degree of his failure, he has no wealth. Nature's challenge to us is, in earnest, as the Assyrians mock; "I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them." Bavieca's paces are brave, if the Cid backs him; but woe to us, if we take the dust of capacity, wearing the armour of it, for capacity itself, for so all procession, however goodly in the show of it, is to the tomb.

36. The second error in this popular view of wealth is, that in giving the name of wealth to things which we cannot use, we in reality confuse wealth with money. The land we have no skill to cultivate, the book which is sealed to us, or dress which is superfluous, may indeed be exchangeable, but as such are nothing more than a cumbrous form of bank-note, of doubtful or slow convertibility. As long as we retain possession of them, we merely keep our bank-notes in the shape of gravel or clay, of book-leaves, or of embroidered tissue. Circumstances may, perhaps, render such forms the safest, or a certain complacency may attach to the exhibition of them; into both these advantages we shall inquire afterwards; I wish the reader

only to observe here, that exchangeable property which we cannot use is, to us personally, merely one of the forms of money, not of wealth.

37. The third error in the popular view is the confusion of Guardianship with Possession; the real state of men of property being, too commonly, that of curators, not possessors, of wealth.

A man's power over his property is at the widest range of it, fivefold; it is power of Use, for himself, Administration, to others, Ostentation, Destruction, or Bequest: and possession is in use only, which for each man is sternly limited; so that such things, and so much of them as he can use, are, indeed, well for him, or Wealth; and more of them, or any other things, are ill for him, or Illth.* Plunged to the lips in Orinoco, he shall drink to his thirst measure; more, at his peril: with a thousand oxen on his lands, he shall eat to his hunger measure; more, at his peril. He cannot live in two houses at once; a few bales of silk or wool will suffice for the fabric of all the clothes he can ever wear, and a few books will probably hold all the furniture good for his brain. Beyond these, in the best of us but narrow, capacities, we have but the power of administering, or *mal*-administering, wealth: (that is to say, distributing, lending, or increasing it);—of exhibiting it (as in magnificence of retinue or furniture),—of destroying, or, finally, of bequeathing it. And with multitudes of rich men, administration degenerates into

* *See* Appendix III.

curatorship; they merely hold their property in charge, as Trustees, for the benefit of some person or persons to whom it is to be delivered upon their death; and the position, explained in clear terms, would hardly seem a covetable one. What would be the probable feelings of a youth, on his entrance into life, to whom the career hoped for him was proposed in terms such as these: "You must work unremittingly, and with your utmost intelligence, during all your available years, you will thus accumulate wealth to a large amount; but you must touch none of it, beyond what is needful for your support. Whatever sums you gain, beyond those required for your decent and moderate maintenance, and whatever beautiful things you may obtain possession of, shall be properly taken care of by servants, for whose maintenance you will be charged, and whom you will have the trouble of superintending, and on your death-bed you shall have the power of determining to whom the accumulated property shall belong, or to what purposes be applied."

38. The labour of life, under such conditions, would probably be neither zealous nor cheerful; yet the only difference between this position and that of the ordinary capitalist is the power which the latter supposes himself to possess, and which is attributed to him by others, of spending his money at any moment. This pleasure, taken *in the imagination of power to part with that with which we have no intention of parting*, is one of the most curious, though commonest forms of the Eidolon, or Phan-

tasm of Wealth. But the political economist has nothing to do with this idealism, and looks only to the practical issue of it—namely, that the holder of wealth, in such temper, may be regarded simply as a mechanical means of collection; or as a money-chest with a slit in it, not only receptant but suctional, set in the public thoroughfare;—chest of which only Death has the key, and evil Chance the distribution of the contents. In his function of Lender (which, however, is one of administration, not use, as far as he is himself concerned), the capitalist takes, indeed, a more interesting aspect; but even in that function, his relations with the state are apt to degenerate into a mechanism for the convenient contraction of debt;—a function the more mischievous, because a nation invariably appeases its conscience with respect to an unjustifiable expense, by meeting it with borrowed funds, expresses its repentance of a foolish piece of business, by letting its tradesmen wait for their money, and always leaves its descendants to pay for the work which will be of the least advantage to them.*

39. Quit of these three sources of misconception, the reader will have little farther difficulty in apprehending the real nature of Effectual value. He may, however, at first not without surprise, perceive the consequences involved in his acceptance of the definition. For if the

[* I would beg the reader's very close attention to these 37th and 38th paragraphs. It would be well if a dogged conviction could be enforced on nations, as on individuals, that, with few exceptions, what they cannot at present pay for, they should not at present have.]

actual existence of wealth be dependent on the power of its possessor, it follows that the sum of wealth held by the nation, instead of being constant or calculable, varies hourly, nay, momentarily, with the number and character of its holders! and that in changing hands, it changes in quantity. And farther, since the worth of the currency is proportioned to the sum of material wealth which it represents, if the sum of the wealth changes, the worth of the currency changes. And thus both the sum of the property, and power of the currency, of the state, vary momentarily as the character and number of the holders. And not only so, but different rates and kinds of variation are caused by the character of the holders of different kinds of wealth. The transitions of value caused by the character of the holders of land differ in mode from those caused by character in holders of works of art; and these again from those caused by character in holders of machinery or other working capital. But we cannot examine these special phenomena of any kind of wealth until we have a clear idea of the way in which true currency expresses them; and of the resulting modes in which the cost and price of any article are related to its value. To obtain this we must approach the subject in its first elements.

40. Let us suppose a national store of wealth, composed of material things either useful, or belived to be so, taken charge of by the Government,* and that every workman,

* *See* Appendix IV.

having produced any article involving labour in its production, and for which he has no immediate use, brings it to add to this store, receiving from the Government, in exchange, an order either for the return of the thing itself, or of its equivalent in other things, such as he may choose out of the store, at any time when he needs them. The question of equivalence itself (how much wine a man is to receive in return for so much corn, or how much coal in return for so much iron) is a quite separate one, which we will examine presently. For the time, let it be assumed that this equivalence has been determined, and that the Government order, in exchange for a fixed weight of any article (called, suppose *a*), is either for the return of that weight of the article itself, or of another fixed weight of the article *b*, or another of the article *c*, and so on.

Now, supposing that the labourer speedily and continually presents these general orders, or, in common language, "spends the money," he has neither changed the circumstances of the nation, nor his own, except in so far as he may have produced useful and consumed useless articles, or *vice versâ*. But if he does not use, or uses in part only, the orders he receives, and lays aside some portion of them; and thus every day bringing his contribution to the national store, lays by some per-centage of the orders received in exchange for it, he increases the national wealth daily by as much as he does not use of the received order, and to the same amount accumulates a monetary claim on the Government. It is, of course, always in his

power, as it is his legal right, to bring forward this accumulation of claim, and at once to consume, destroy, or distribute, the sum of his wealth. Supposing he never does so, but dies, leaving his claim to others, he has enriched the State during his life by the quantity of wealth over which that claim extends, or has, in other words, rendered so much additional life possible in the State, of which additional life he bequeaths the immediate possibility to those whom he invests with his claim. Supposing him to cancel the claim, he would distribute this possibility of life among the nation at large.

41. We hitherto consider the Government itself as simply a conservative power, taking charge of the wealth entrusted to it.

But a Government may be more or less than a conservative power. It may be either an improving, or destructive one.

If it be an improving power, using all the wealth entrusted to it to the best advantage, the nation is enriched in root and branch at once, and the Government is enabled, for every order presented, to return a quantity of wealth greater than the order was written for, according to the fructification obtained in the interim. This ability may be either concealed, in which case the currency does not completely represent the wealth of the country, or it may be manifested by the continual payment of the excess of value on each order, in which case there is (irrespectively, observe, of collateral results after

wards to be examined) a perpetual rise in the worth of the currency, that is to say, a fall in the price of all articles represented by it.

42. But if the Government be destructive, or a consuming power, it becomes unable to return the value received on the presentation of the order.

This inability may either be concealed by meeting demands to the full, until it issue in bankruptcy, or in some form of national debt;—or it may be concealed during oscillatory movements between destructiveness and productiveness, which result on the whole in stability;—or it may be manifested by the consistent return of less than value received on each presented order, in which case there is a consistent fall in the worth of the currency, or rise in the price of the things represented by it.

43. Now, if for this conception of a central Government, we substitute that of a body of persons occupied in industrial pursuits, of whom each adds in his private capacity to the common store, we at once obtain an approximation to the actual condition of a civilized mercantile community, from which approximation we might easily proceed into still completer analysis. I purpose, however, to arrive at every result by the gradual expansion of the simpler conception; but I wish the reader to observe, in the meantime, that both the social conditions thus supposed (and I will by anticipation say also, all possible social conditions), agree in two great points; namely, in the primal importance of the supposed national

store or stock, and in its destructibility or improveability by the holders of it.

44. I. Observe that in both conditions, that of central Government-holding, and diffused private-holding, the quantity of stock is of the same national moment. In the one case, indeed, its amount may be known by examination of the persons to whom it is confided; in the other it cannot be known but by exposing the private affairs of every individual. But, known or unknown, its significance is the same under each condition. The riches of the nation consist in the abundance, and their wealth depends on the nature, of this store.

45. II. In the second place, both conditions, (and all other possible ones) agree in the destructibility or improveability of the store by its holders. Whether in private hands, or under Government charge, the national store may be daily consumed, or daily enlarged, by its possessors; and while the currency remains apparently unaltered, the property it represents may diminish or increase.

46. The first question, then, which we have to put under our simple conception of central Government, namely, "What store has it?" is one of equal importance, whatever may be the constitution of the State; while the second question—namely, "Who are the holders of the store?" involves the discussion of the constitution of the State itself.

The first inquiry resolves itself into three heads:

1. What is the nature of the store?

2. What is its quantity in relation to the population?

3. What is its quantity in relation to the currency?

The second inquiry into two:

1. Who are the Holders of the store, and in what proportions?

2. Who are the Claimants of the store, (that is to say, the holders of the currency,) and in what proportions?

We will examine the range of the first three questions in the present paper; of the two following, in the sequel.

47. I. Question First. What is the nature of the store? Has the nation hitherto worked for and gathered the right thing or the wrong? On that issue rest the possibilities of its life.

For example, let us imagine a society, of no great extent, occupied in procuring and laying up store of corn, wine, wool, silk, and other such preservable materials of food and clothing; and that it has a currency representing them. Imagine farther, that on days of festivity, the society, discovering itself to derive satisfaction from pyrotechnics, gradually turns its attention more and more to the manufacture of gunpowder; so that an increasing number of labourers, giving what time they can spare to this branch of industry, bring increasing quantities of combustibles into the store, and use the general orders received in exchange to obtain such wine, wool, or corn, as they may have need of. The currency remains the same, and represents precisely the same

amount of material in the store, and of labour spent in producing it. But the corn and wine gradually vanish, and in their place, as gradually, appear sulphur and saltpetre, till at last the labourers who have consumed corn and supplied nitre, presenting on a festal morning some of their currency to obtain materials for the feast, discover that no amount of currency will command anything Festive, except Fire. The supply of rockets is unlimited, but that of food, limited, in a quite final manner; and the whole currency in the hands of the society represents an infinite power of detonation, but none of existence.

48. This statement, caricatured as it may seem, is only exaggerated in assuming the persistence of the folly to extremity, unchecked, as in reality it would be, by the gradual rise in price of food. But it falls short of the actual facts of human life in expression of the depth and intensity of the folly itself. For a great part (the reader would not believe how great until he saw the statistics in detail) of the most earnest and ingenious industry of the world is spent in producing munitions of war; gathering, that is to say the materials, not of festive, but of consuming fire; filling its stores with all power of the instruments of pain, and all affluence of the ministries of death It was no true *Trionfo della Morte** which men have seen and feared (sometimes scarcely feared) so long;

[* I little thought, what *Trionfo della Morte* would be, for this very cause, and in literal fulfilment of the closing words of the 47th paragraph, over the fields and houses of Europe, and over its fairest city—within seven years from the day I wrote it.]

wherein he brought them rest from their labours. We see, and share, another and higher form of his triumph now. Task-master, instead of Releaser, he rules the dust of the arena no less than of the tomb; and, content once in the grave whither man went, to make his works to cease and his devices to vanish,—now, in the busy city and on the serviceable sea, makes his work to increase, and his devices to multiply.

49. To this doubled loss, or negative power of labour, spent in producing means of destruction, we have to add, in our estimate of the consequences of human folly, whatever more insidious waste of toil there is in production of unnecessary luxury. Such and such an occupation (it is said) supports so many labourers, because so many obtain wages in following it; but it is never considered that unless there be a supporting power in the product of the occupation, the wages given to one man are merely withdrawn from another. We cannot say of any trade that it maintains such and such a number of persons, unless we know how and where the money, now spent in the purchase of its produce, would have been spent, if that produce had not been manufactured. The purchasing funds truly support a number of people in making This; but (probably) leave unsupported an equal number who are making, or could have made That. The manufacturers of small watches thrive at Geneva;—it is well;—but where would the money spent on small watches have gone, had there been no small watches to buy?

50. If the so frequently uttered aphorism of mercantile economy—"labour is limited by capital," were true, this question would be a definite one. But it is untrue; and that widely. Out of a given quantity of funds for wages, more or less labour is to be had, according to the quantity of will with which we can inspire the workman; and the true limit of labour is only in the limit of this moral stimulus of the will, and of the bodily power. In an ultimate, but entirely unpractical sense, labour is limited by capital, as it is by matter—that is to say, where there is no material, there can be no work,—but in the practical sense, labour is limited only by the great original capital of head, heart, and hand. Even in the most artificial relations of commerce, labour is to capital as fire to fuel: out of so much fuel, you *can* have only so much fire; but out of so much fuel you *shall* have so much fire,—not in proportion to the mass of combustible, but to the force of wind that fans and water that quenches; and the appliance of both. And labour is furthered, as conflagration is, not so much by added fuel, as by admitted air.*

51. For which reasons, I had to insert, in § 49, the qualifying "probably;" for it can never be said positively that the purchase-money, or wages fund of any trade is withdrawn from some other trade. The object itself may be

[* The meaning of which is, that you may spend a great deal of money, and get very little work for it, and that little bad; but having good "air," or "spirit," to put life into it, with very little money, you may get a great deal of work, and all good; which, observe, is an arithmetical, not at all a poetical or visionary circumstance.]

the stimulus of the production of the money which buys it; that is to say, the work by which the purchaser obtained the means of buying it, would not have been done by him unless he had wanted that particular thing. And the production of any article not intrinsically (nor in the process of manufacture) injurious, is useful, if the desire of it causes productive labour in other directions.

52. In the national store, therefore, the presence of things intrinsically valueless does not imply an entirely correlative absence of things valuable. We cannot be certain that all the labour spent on vanity has been diverted from reality, and that for every bad thing produced, a precious thing has been lost. In great measure, the vain things represent the results of roused indolence; they have been carved, as toys, in extra time; and, if they had not been made, nothing else would have been made. Even to munitions of war this principle applies; they partly represent the work of men who, if they had not made spears, would never have made pruning hooks, and who are incapable of any activities but those of contest.

53. Thus then, finally, the nature of the store has to be considered under two main lights; the one, that of its immediate and actual utility; the other, that of the past national character which it signifies by its production, and future character which it must develop by its use. And the issue of this investigation will be to show us that

Economy does not depend merely on principles of "demand and supply," but primarily on what is de-

manded, and what is supplied; which I will beg of you to observe, and take to heart.

54. II. Question Second.—What is the quantity of the store, in relation to the population?

It follows from what has been already stated that the accurate form in which this question has to be put is—"What quantity of each article composing the store exists in proportion to the real need for it by the population?" But we shall for the time assume, in order to keep all our terms at the simplest, that the store is wholly composed of useful articles, and accurately proportioned to the several needs for them.

Now it cannot be assumed, because the store is large in proportion to the number of the people, that the people must be in comfort; nor because it is small, that they must be in distress. An active and economical race always produces more than it requires, and lives (if it is permitted to do so) in competence on the produce of its daily labour. The quantity of its store, great or small, is therefore in many respects indifferent to it, and cannot be inferred from its aspect. Similarly an inactive and wasteful population, which cannot live by its daily labour, but is dependent, partly or wholly, on consumption of its store, may be (by various difficulties, hereafter to be examined, in realizing or getting at such store) retained in a state of abject distress, though its possessions may be immense. But the results always involved in the magnitude of store

are, the commercial power of the nation, its security, and its mental character. Its commercial power, in that according to the quantity of its store, may be the extent of its dealings; its security, in that according to the quantity of its store are its means of sudden exertion or sustained endurance; and its character, in that certain conditions of civilization cannot be attained without permanent and continually accumulating store, of great intrinsic value, and of peculiar nature.*

55. Now, seeing that these three advantages arise from largeness of store in proportion to population, the question arises immediately, "Given the store—is the nation enriched by diminution of its numbers? Are a successful national speculation, and a pestilence, economically the same thing?

This is in part a sophistical question; such as it would be to ask whether a man was richer when struck by disease which must limit his life within a predicable period, than he was when in health. He is enabled to enlarge his current expenses, and has for all purposes a larger sum at his immediate disposal (for, given the fortune, the shorter the life, the larger the annuity); yet no man considers himself richer because he is condemned by his physician.

56. The logical reply is that, since Wealth is by definition only the means of life, a nation cannot be enriched by its own mortality. Or in shorter words, the life is more than the meat; and existence itself, more wealth than the means of existence. Whence, of two nations who have

[* More especially, works of great art.]

equal store, the more numerous is to be considered the richer, provided the type of the inhabitant be as high (for, though the relative bulk of their store be less, its relative efficiency, or the amount of effectual wealth, must be greater). But if the type of the population be deteriorated by increase of its numbers, we have evidence of poverty in its worst influence; and then, to determine whether the nation in its total may still be justifiably esteemed rich, we must set or weigh, the number of the poor against that of the rich.

To effect which piece of scale-work, it is of course necessary to determine, first, who are poor and who are rich; nor this only, but also how poor and how rich they are. Which will prove a curious thermometrical investigation; for we shall have to do for gold and for silver, what we have done for quicksilver; — determine, namely, their freezing-point, their zero, their temperate and fever-heat points; finally, their vaporescent point, at which riches, sometimes explosively, as lately in America, "make to themselves wings:"—and correspondently, the number of degrees *below* zero at which poverty, ceasing to brace with any wholesome cold, burns to the bone.*

[* The meaning of that, in plain English, is, that we must find out how far poverty and riches are good or bad for people, and what is the difference between being miserably poor—so as, perhaps, to be driven to crime, or to pass life in suffering—and being blessedly poor, in the sense meant in the Sermon on the Mount. For I suppose the people who believe that sermon, do not think (if they ever honestly ask themselves what they do think), either that Luke vi. 24. is a merely poetical

57. For the performance of these operations, in the strictest sense scientific, we will first look to the existing so called "science" of Political Economy; we will ask it to define for us the comparatively and superlatively rich, and the comparatively and superlatively poor; and on its own terms—if any terms it can pronounce—examine, in our prosperous England, how many rich and how many poor people there are; and whether the quantity and intensity of the poverty is indeed so overbalanced by the quantity and intensity of wealth, that we may permit ourselves a luxurious blindness to it, and call ourselves, complacently, a rich country. And if we find no clear definition in the existing science, we will endeavour for ourselves to fix the true degrees of the scale, and to apply them.*

58. Question Third. What is the quantity of the store in relation to the Currency?

We have seen that the real worth of the currency, so far as dependent on its relation to the magnitude of the store, may vary, within certain limits, without affecting its worth in exchange. The diminution or increase of the represented wealth may be unperceived, and the currency may be taken either for more or less than it is truly worth. Usually it is taken for much more; and its power in ex-

exclamation, or that the Beatitude of Poverty has yet been attained in St. Martin's Lane and other back streets of London.]

[* Large plans!—Eight years are gone, and nothing done yet But I keep my purpose of making one day this balance, or want of balance, visible, in those so seldom used scales of Justice.]

change, or credit-power, is thus increased up to a given strain upon its relation to existing wealth. This credit-power is of chief importance in the thoughts, because most sharply present to the experience, of a mercantile community: but the conditions of its stability * and all other relations of the currency to the material store are entirely simple in principle, if not in action. Far other than simple are the relations of the currency to the available labour which it also represents. For this relation is involved not only with that of the magnitude of the store to the number, but with that of the magnitude of the store to the mind, of the population. Its proportion to their number, and the resulting worth of currency, are calculable; but its proportion to their will for labour is not. The worth of the piece of money which claims a given quantity of the store is, in exchange, less or greater according to the

* These are nearly all briefly represented by the image used for the force of money by Dante, of mast and sail:—

Quali dal vento le gonfiate vele
Caggiono avvolte, poi chè l'alber fiacca
Tal cadde a terra la fiera crudele.

The image may be followed out, like all of Dante's, into as close detail as the reader chooses. Thus the stress of the sail must be proportioned to the strength of the mast, and it is only in unforeseen danger that a skilful seaman ever carries all the canvas his spars will bear; states of mercantile languor are like the flap of the sail in a calm; of mercantile precaution, like taking in reefs; and mercantile ruin is instant on the breaking of the mast.

[I mean by credit-power, the general impression on the national mind that a sovereign, or any other coin, is worth so much bread and cheese—so much wine—so much horse and carriage—or so much fine art: it may be really worth, when tried, less or more than is thought: the thought of it is the credit-power.]

facility of obtaining the same quantity of the same thing without having recourse to the store. In other words it depends on the immediate Cost and Price of the thing. We must now, therefore, complete the definition of these terms.

59. All cost and price are counted in Labour. We must know first, therefore, what is to be counted *as* Labour.

I have already defined labour to be the Contest of the life of man with an opposite. Literally, it is the quantity of "Lapse," loss, or failure of human life, caused by any effort. It is usually confused with effort itself, or the application of power (opera); but there is much effort which is merely a mode of recreation, or of pleasure. The most beautiful actions of the human body, and the highest results of the human intelligence, are conditions, or achievements, of quite unlaborious,—nay, of recreative,—effort. But labour is the *suffering* in effort. It is the negative quantity, or quantity of de-feat, which has to be counted against every Feat, and of de-fect which has to be counted against every Fact, or Deed of men. In brief, it is "that quantity of our toil which we die in."

We might, therefore, *à priori*, conjecture (as we shall ultimately find), that it cannot be bought, nor sold. Everything else is bought and sold for Labour, but labour itself cannot be bought nor sold for anything, being priceless.* The idea that it is a commodity to be

* The object of Political Economy is not to buy, nor to sell labour, but to spare it. Every attempt to buy or sell it is, in the outcome,

bought or sold, is the alpha and omega of Politico-Economic fallacy.

60. This being the nature of labour, the "Cost" of anything is the quantity of labour necessary to obtain it;—the quantity for which, or at which, it "stands" (constat). It is literally the "Constancy" of the thing;—you shall win it—move it—come at it, for no less than this.

Cost is measured and measurable (using the accurate Latin terms) only in "labor," not in "opera."* It does not matter how much *work* a thing needs to produce it; it matters only how much *distress*. Generally the more the power it requires, the less the distress; so that the noblest works of man cost less than the meanest.

True labour, or spending of life, is either of the body, in fatigue or pain; of the temper or heart (as in perseverance of search for things,—patience in waiting for

ineffectual; so far as successful, it is not sale, but Betrayal; and the purchase-money is a part of that thirty pieces which bought, first the greatest of labours, and afterwards the burial-field of the Stranger; for this purchase-money, being in its very smallness or vileness the exactly measured opposite of the "vilis annona amicorum," makes all men strangers to each other.

* Cicero's distinction, "sordidi quæstus, quorum operæ, non quorum artes emuntur," admirable in principle, is inaccurate in expression, because Cicero did not practically know how much operative dexterity is necessary in all the higher arts; but the cost of this dexterity is incalculable. Be it great or small, the "cost" of the mere perfectness of touch in a hammer-stroke of Donatello's, or a pencil-touch of Correggio's, is inestimable by any ordinary arithmetic.

[Old notes, these, more embarrassing I now perceive, than elucidatory; but right, and worth retaining.]

them,—fortitude or degradation in suffering for them, and the like), or of the intellect. All these kinds of labour are supposed to be included in the general term, and the quantity of labour is then expressed by the time it lasts. So that a unit of labour is "an hour's work" or a day's work, as we may determine.*

61. Cost, like value, is both intrinsic and effectual. Intrinsic cost is that of getting the thing in the right way; effectual cost is that of getting the thing in the way we set about it. But intrinsic cost cannot be made a subject of analytical investigation, being only partially discoverable, and that by long experience. Effectual cost is all that the political Economist can deal with; that is to say, the cost of the thing under existing circumstances, and by known processes.

Cost, being dependent much on application of method, varies with the quantity of the thing wanted, and with the number of persons who work for it. It is easy to get a little of some things, but difficult to get much; it is impossible to get some things with few hands, but easy to get them with many.

62. The cost and value of things, however difficult to determine accurately, are thus both dependent on ascertainable physical circumstances.†

* Only observe, as some labour is more destructive of life than other labour, the hour or day of the more destructive toil is supposed to include proportionate rest. Though men do not, or cannot, usually take such rest, except in death.

† There is, therefore, observe, no such thing as cheapness (in the

But their *price* is dependent on the human will.

Such and such a thing is demonstrably good for so much. And it may demonstrably be had for so much.

common use of that term), without some error or injustice. A thing is said to be cheap, not because it is common, but because it is supposed to be sold under its worth. Everything has its proper and true worth at any given time, in relation to everything else; and at that worth should be bought and sold. If sold under it, it is cheap to the buyer by exactly so much as the seller loses, and no more. Putrid meat, at twopence a pound, is not "cheaper" than wholesome meat at sevenpence a pound; it is probably much dearer; but if, by watching your opportunity, you can get the wholesome meat for sixpence a pound, it is cheaper to you by a penny, which you have gained, and the seller has lost. The present rage for cheapness is either, therefore, simply and literally a rage for badness of all commodities, or it is an attempt to find persons whose necessities will force them to let you have more than you should for your money. It is quite easy to produce such persons, and in large numbers; for the more distress there is in a nation, the more cheapness of this sort you can obtain, and your boasted cheapness is thus merely a measure of the extent of your national distress.

There is, indeed, a condition of apparent cheapness, which we have some right to be triumphant in; namely, the real reduction in cost of articles by right application of labour. But in this case the article is only cheap with reference to its *former* price; the so-called cheapness is only our expression for the sensation of contrast between its former and existing prices. So soon as the new methods of producing the article are established, it ceases to be esteemed either cheap or dear, at the new price, as at the old one, and is felt to be cheap only when accident enables it to be purchased beneath this new value. And it is no advantage to produce the article more easily, except as it enables you to multiply your population. Cheapness of this kind is merely the discovery that more men can be maintained on the same ground; and the question how many you will maintain in proportion to your additional means, remains exactly in the same terms that it did before.

A form of immediate cheapness results, however, in many cases, without distress, from the labour of a population where food is redundant, or where the labour by which the food is produced leaves much

But it remains questionable, and in all manner of ways questionable, whether I choose to give so much.*

This choice is always a relative one. It is a choice to give a price for this, rather than for that;—a resolution to have the thing, if getting it does not involve the loss of a better thing. Price depends, therefore, not only on the cost of the commodity itself, but on its relation to the cost of every other attainable thing.

Farther. The *power* of choice is also a relative one. It depends not merely on our own estimate of the thing, but on everybody else's estimate; therefore on the number and force of the will of the concurrent buyers, and on the

idle time on their hands, which may be applied to the production of "cheap" articles.

All such phenomena indicate to the political economist places where the labour is unbalanced. In the first case, the just balance is to be effected by taking labourers from the spot where pressure exists, and sending them to that where food is redundant. In the second, the cheapness is a local accident, advantageous to the local purchaser, disadvantageous to the local producer. It is one of the first duties of commerce to extend the market, and thus give the local producer his full advantage.

Cheapness caused by natural accidents of harvest, weather, &c., is always counterbalanced, in due time, by natural scarcity, similarly caused. It is the part of wise government, and healthy commerce, so to provide in times and places of plenty for times and places of dearth, as that there shall never be waste, nor famine.

Cheapness caused by gluts of the market is merely a disease of clumsy and wanton commerce.

* Price has been already defined (p. 9) to be the quantity of labour which the possessor of a thing is willing to take for it. It is best to consider the price to be that fixed by the possessor, because the possessor has absolute power of refusing sale, while the purchaser has no absolute power of compelling it; but the effectual or market price is that at which their estimates coincide.

existing quantity of the thing in proportion to that number and force.

Hence the price of anything depends on four variables.

(1.) Its cost.

(2.) Its attainable quantity at that cost.

(3.) The number and power of the persons who want it.

(4.) The estimate they have formed of its desirableness.

Its value only affects its price so far as it is contemplated in this estimate; perhaps, therefore, not at all.

63. Now, in order to show the manner in which price is expressed in terms of a currency, we must assume these four quantities to be known, and the "estimate of desirableness," commonly called the Demand, to be certain. We will take the number of persons at the lowest. Let A and B be two labourers who "demand," that is to say, have resolved to labour for, two articles, *a* and *b*. Their demand for these articles (if the reader likes better, he may say their need) is to be conceived as absolute, their existence depending on the getting these two things. Suppose, for instance, that they are bread and fuel, in a cold country, and let *a* represent the least quantity of bread, and *b* the least quantity of fuel, which will support a man's life for a day. Let *a* be producible by an hour's labour, but *b* only by two hours' labour.

Then the *cost* of *a* is one hour, and of *b* two (cost, by our definition, being expressible in terms of time). If, therefore, each man worked both for his corn and fuel, each would have to work three hours a day. But they

divide the labour for its greater ease.* Then if A works three hours, he produces 3 *a*, which is one *a* more than both the men want. And if B works three hours, he produces only $1\frac{1}{2}$ *b*, or half of *b* less than both want. But if A work three hours and B six, A has 3 *a*, and B has 3 *b*, a maintenance in the right proportion for both for a day and half; so that each might take half a day's rest. But as B has worked double time, the whole of this day's rest belongs in equity to him. Therefore the just exchange should be, A giving two *a* for one *b*, has one *a* and one *b*; --maintenance for a day. B giving one *b* for two *a*, has two *a* and two *b*;—maintenance for two days.

But B cannot rest on the second day, or A would be left without the article which B produces. Nor is there any means of making the exchange just, unless a third labourer is called in. Then one workman, A, produces *a*, and two, B and C, produce *b* :—A, working three hours, has three *a* ;—B, three hours, $1\frac{1}{2}$ *b* ;—C, three hours, $1\frac{1}{2}$ *b*. B and C each give half of *b* for *a*, and all have their equal daily maintenance for equal daily work.

To carry the example a single step farther, let three articles, *a*, *b*, and *c* be needed.

Let *a* need one hour's work, *b* two, and *c* four; then the day's work must be seven hours, and one man in a day's work can make 7 *a*, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ *b*, or $1\frac{3}{4}$ *c*.

* This "greater ease" ought to be allowed for by a diminution in the times of the divided work; but as the proportion of times would remain the same, I do not introduce this unnecessary complexity into the calculation.

Therefore one A works for *a*, producing 7 *a*; two B's work for *b*, producing 7 *b*; four C's work for *c*, producing 7 *c*.

A has six *a* to spare, and gives two *a* for one *b*, and four *a* for one *c*. Each B has $2\frac{1}{2}$ *b* to spare, and gives $\frac{1}{2}$ *b* for one *a*, and two *b* for one *c*.

Each C has $\frac{3}{4}$ of *c* to spare, and gives $\frac{1}{2}$ *c* for one *b*, and $\frac{1}{4}$ of *c* for one *a*.

And all have their day's maintenance.

Generally, therefore, it follows that if the demand is constant,* the relative prices of things are as their costs, or as the quantities of labour involved in production.

64. Then, in order to express their prices in terms of a currency, we have only to put the currency into the form of orders for a certain quantity of any given article (with us it is in the form of orders for gold), and all quantities of other articles are priced by the relation they bear to the article which the currency claims.

But the worth of the currency itself is not in the slightest degree founded more on the worth of the article which it either claims or consists in (as gold) than on the worth of every other article for which the gold is exchangeable. It is just as accurate to say, "so many pounds are worth an acre of land," as "an acre of land is worth so many pounds." The worth of gold, of land, of houses, and of food, and of all other things, depends at any moment on the existing quantities and relative demands for all and

* Compare *Unto this Last*, p. 115, *et seq.*

each; and a change in the worth of, or demand for, any one, involves an instantaneously correspondent change in the worth of, and demand for, all the rest;—a change as inevitable and as accurately balanced (though often in its process as untraceable) as the change in volume of the outflowing river from some vast lake, caused by change in the volume of the inflowing streams, though no eye can trace, nor instrument detect, motion, either on its surface, or in the depth.

65. Thus, then, the real working power or worth of the currency is founded on the entire sum of the relative estimates formed by the population of its possessions; a change in this estimate in any direction (and therefore every change in the national character), instantly alters the value of money, in its second great function of commanding labour. But we must always carefully and sternly distinguish between this worth of currency, dependent on the conceived or appreciated value of what it represents, and the worth of it, dependent on the *existence* of what it represents. A currency is *true, or false*, in proportion to the security with which it gives claim to the possession of land, house, horse, or picture; but a currency is *strong or weak*,* worth much, or worth little, in proportion to the degree of estimate in which the nation holds the house, horse, or picture which is claimed. Thus the power of the

[* That is to say, the love of money is founded first on the intenseness of desire for given things; a youth will rob the till, now-a-days, for pantomime tickets and cigars; the "strength" of the currency being irresistible to him, in consequence of his desire for those luxuries.]

English currency has been, till of late, largely based on the national estimate of horses and of wine: so that a man might always give any price to furnish choicely his stable, or his cellar; and receive public approval therefore: but if he gave the same sum to furnish his library, he was called mad, or a biblio-maniac. And although he might lose his fortune by his horses, and his health or life by his cellar, and rarely lost either by his books, he was yet never called a Hippo-maniac nor an Oino-maniac; but only Biblio-maniac, because the current worth of money was understood to be legitimately founded on cattle and wine, but not on literature. The prices lately given at sales for pictures and MSS. indicate some tendency to change in the national character in this respect, so that the worth of the currency may even come in time to rest, in an acknowledged manner, somewhat on the state and keeping of the Bedford missal, as well as on the health of Caractacus or Blink Bonny; and old pictures be considered property, no less than old port. They might have been so before now, but that it is more difficult to choose the one than the other.

66. Now, observe, all these sources of variation in the power of the currency exist, wholly irrespective of the influences of vice, indolence, and improvidence. We have hitherto supposed, throughout the analysis, every professing labourer to labour honestly, heartily, and in harmony with his fellows. We have now to bring farther into the calculation the effects of relative industry, honour,

and forethought; and thus to follow out the bearings of our second inquiry: Who are the holders of the Store and Currency, and in what proportions?

This, however, we must reserve for our next paper —noticing here only that, however distinct the several branches of the subject are, radically, they are so interwoven in their issues that we cannot rightly treat any one, till we have taken cognizance of all. Thus the need of the currency in proportion to number of population is materially influenced by the probable number of the holders in proportion to the non-holders; and this again, by the number of holders of goods, or wealth, in proportion to the non-holders of goods. For as, by definition, the currency is a claim to goods which are not possessed, its quantity indicates the number of claimants in proportion to the number of holders; and the force and complexity of claim. For if the claims be not complex, currency as a means of exchange may be very small in quantity. A sells some corn to B, receiving a promise from B to pay in cattle, which A then hands over to C, to get some wine. C in due time claims the cattle from B; and B takes back his promise. These exchanges have, or might have been, all effected with a single coin or promise; and the proportion of the currency to the store would in such circumstances indicate only the circulating vitality of it—that is to say, the quantity and convenient divisibility of that part of the store which the *habits* of the nation keep in circulation. If a cattle breeder is content to live with his

household chiefly on meat and milk, and does not want rich furniture, or jewels, or books—if a wine and corn grower maintains himself and his men chiefly on grapes and bread;—if the wives and daughters of families weave and spin the clothing of the household, and the nation, as a whole, remains content with the produce of its own soil and the work of its own hands, it has little occasion for circulating media. It pledges and promises little and seldom; exchanges only so far as exchange is necessary for life. The store belongs to the people in whose hands it is found, and money is little needed either as an expression of right, or practical means of division and exchange.

67. But in proportion as the habits of the nation become complex and fantastic (and they may be both, without therefore being civilized), its circulating medium must increase in proportion to its store. If every one wants a little of everything,—if food must be of many kinds, and dress of many fashions,—if multitudes live by work which, ministering to fancy, has its pay measured by fancy, so that large prices will be given by one person for what is valueless to another,—if there are great inequalities of knowledge, causing great inequalities of estimate,—and, finally, and worst of all, if the currency itself, from its largeness, and the power which the possession of it implies, becomes the sole object of desire with large numbers of the nation, so that the holding of it is disputed among them as the main object of life:—in each and all of these cases, the currency necessarily enlarges

in proportion to the store; and as a means of exchange and division, as a bond of right, and as an object of passion, has a more and more important and malignant power over the nation's dealings, character, and life.

Against which power, when, as a bond of Right, it becomes too conspicuous and too burdensome, the popular voice is apt to be raised in a violent and irrational manner, leading to revolution instead of remedy. Whereas all possibility of Economy depends on the clear assertion and maintenance of this bond of right, however burdensome. The first necessity of all economical government is to secure the unquestioned and unquestionable working of the great law of Property—that a man who works for a thing shall be allowed to get it, keep it, and consume it, in peace; and that he who does not eat his cake to-day, shall be seen, without grudging, to have his cake to-morrow. This, I say, is the first point to be secured by social law; without this, no political advance, nay, no political existence, is in any sort possible. Whatever evil, luxury, iniquity, may seem to result from it, this is nevertheless the first of all Equities; and to the enforcement of this, by law and by police-truncheon, the nation must always primarily set its mind—that the cupboard door may have a firm lock to it, and no man's dinner be carried off by the mob, on its way home from the baker's. Which, thus fearlessly asserting, we shall endeavour in next paper to consider how far it may be practicable for the mob itself, also, in due breadth of dish, to have dinners to carry home.

CHAPTER III.

COIN-KEEPING.

68. It will be seen by reference to the last chapter that our present task is to examine the relation of holders of store to holders of currency; and of both to those who hold neither. In order to do this, we must determine on which side we are to place substances such as gold, commonly known as bases of currency. By aid of previous definitions the reader will now be able to understand closer statements than have yet been possible.

69. *The currency of any country consists of every document acknowledging debt, which is transferable in the country.**

This transferableness depends upon its intelligibility and credit. Its intelligibility depends chiefly on the difficulty of forging anything like it;—its credit much on national character, but ultimately *always on the existence of substantial means of meeting its demand.*†

[* Remember this definition: it is of great importance as opposed to the imperfect ones usually given. When first these essays were published, I remember one of their reviewers asking contemptuously, "Is half-a-crown a document?" it never having before occurred to him that a document might be stamped as well as written, and stamped on silver as well as on parchment.]

[† I do not mean the demand of the holder of a five pound note for

As the degrees of transferableness are variable, (some documents passing only in certain places, and others passing, if at all, for less than their inscribed value), both the mass, and, so to speak, fluidity, of the currency, are variable. True or perfect currency flows freely, like a pure stream; it becomes sluggish or stagnant in proportion to the quantity of less transferable matter which mixes with it, adding to its bulk, but diminishing its purity. [Articles of commercial value, on which bills are drawn, increase the currency indefinitely; and substances of intrinsic value if stamped or signed without restriction so as to become acknowledgments of debt, increase it indefinitely also.] Every bit of gold found in Australia, so long as it remains uncoined, is an article offered for sale like any other; but as soon as it is coined into pounds, it diminishes the value of every pound we have now in our pockets.

70. Legally authorized or national currency, in its perfect condition, is a form of public acknowledgment of debt, so regulated and divided that any person presenting a commodity of tried worth in the public market, shall, if he please, receive in exchange for it a document giving him claim to the return of its equivalent, (1) in any place, (2) at any time, and (3) in any kind.

When currency is quite healthy and vital, the persons entrusted with its management are always able to give on demand either,

five pounds, but the demand of the holder of a pound for a pound's worth of something good.]

A. The assigning document for the assigned quantity of goods. Or,

B. The assigned quantity of goods for the assigning document.

If they cannot give document for goods, the national exchange is at fault.

If they cannot give goods for document, the national credit is at fault.

The nature and power of the document are therefore to be examined under the three relations it bears to Place, Time, and Kind.

71. (1.) It gives claim to the return of equivalent wealth in any *Place*. Its use in this function is to save carriage, so that parting with a bushel of corn in London, we may receive an order for a bushel of corn at the Antipodes, or elsewhere. To be perfect in this use, the substance of currency must be to the maximum portable, credible, and intelligible. Its non-acceptance or discredit results always from some form of ignorance or dishonour: so far as such interruptions rise out of differences in denomination, there is no ground for their continuance among civilized nations. It may be convenient in one country to use chiefly copper for coinage, in another silver, and in another gold,—reckoning accordingly in centimes, francs, or zecchins: but that a franc should be different in weight and value from a shilling, and a zwanziger vary from both, is wanton loss of commercial power.

72. (2.) It gives claim to the return of equivalent wealth at any *Time*. In this second use, currency is the exponent of accumulation: it renders the laying-up of store at the command of individuals unlimitedly possible;—whereas, but for its intervention, all gathering would be confined within certain limits by the bulk of property, or by its decay, or the difficulty of its guardianship. "I will pull down my barns and build greater," cannot be a daily saying; and all material investment is enlargement of care. The national currency transfers the guardianship of the store to many; and preserves to the original producer the right of reentering on its possession at any future period.

73. (3.) It gives claim (practical, though not legal) to the return of equivalent wealth in any *Kind*. It is a transferable right, not merely to this or that, but to anything; and its power in this function is proportioned to the range of choice. If you give a child an apple or a toy, you give him a determinate pleasure, but if you give him a penny, an indeterminate one, proportioned to the range of selection offered by the shops in the village. The power of the world's currency is similarly in proportion to the openness of the world's fair, and, commonly, enhanced by the brilliancy of external aspect, rather than solidity of its wares.

74. We have said that the currency consists of orders for equivalent goods. If equivalent their quality must

be guaranteed. The kinds of goods chosen for specific claim must, therefore, be capable of test, while, also, that a store may be kept in hand to meet the call of the currency, smallness of bulk, with great relative value, is desirable; and indestructibility, over at least a certain period, essential.

Such indestructibility, and facility of being tested, are united in gold; its intrinsic value is great, and its imaginary value greater; so that, partly through indolence, partly through necessity and want of organization, most nations have agreed to take gold for the only basis of their currencies;—with this grave disadvantage, that its portability enabling the metal to become an active part of the medium of exchange, the stream of the currency itself becomes opaque with gold —half currency and half commodity, in unison of functions which partly neutralize, partly enhance each other's force.

75. They partly neutralize, since in so far as the gold is commodity, it is bad currency, because liable to sale; and in so far as it is currency, it is bad commodity, because its exchange value interferes with its practical use. Especially its employment in the higher branches of the arts becomes unsafe on account of its liability to be melted down for exchange.

Again. They partly enhance, since in so far as the gold has acknowledged intrinsic value, it is good currency, because everywhere acceptable; and in so far as

it has legal exchangeable value, its worth as a commo dity is increased. We want no gold in the form of dust or crystal; but we seek for it coined, because in that form it will pay baker and butcher. And this worth in exchange not only absorbs a large quantity in that use,* but greatly increases the effect on the imagination of the quantity used in the arts. Thus, in brief, the force of the functions is increased, but their precision blunted, by their unison.

76. These inconveniences, however, attach to gold as a basis of currency on account of its portability and preciousness. But a far greater inconvenience attaches to it as the only legal basis of currency. Imagine gold to be only attainable in masses weighing several pounds each, and its value, like that of malachite or marble, proportioned to its largeness of bulk;—it could not then get

* [Read and think over, the following note very carefully.]

The waste of labour in obtaining the gold, though it cannot be estimated by help of any existing data, may be understood in its bearing on entire economy by supposing it limited to transactions between two persons. If two farmers in Australia have been exchanging corn and cattle with each other for years, keeping their accounts of reciprocal debt in any simple way, the sum of the possessions of either would not be diminished, though the part of it which was lent or borrowed were only reckoned by marks on a stone, or notches on a tree; and the one counted himself accordingly, so many scratches, or so many notches, better than the other. But it would soon be seriously diminished if, discovering gold in their fields, each resolved only to accept golden counters for a reckoning; and accordingly, whenever he wanted a sack of corn or a cow, was obliged to go and wash sand for a week before he could get the means of giving a receipt for them.

itself confused with the currency in daily use, but it might still remain as its basis; and this second inconvenience would still affect it, namely, that its significance as an expression of debt varies, as that of every other article would, with the popular estimate of its desirableness, and with the quantity offered in the market. My power of obtaining other goods for gold depends always on the strength of public passion for gold, and on the limitation of its quantity, so that when either of two things happen —that the world esteems gold less, or finds it more easily —*my right of claim is in that degree effaced;* and it has been even gravely maintained that a discovery of a mountain of gold would cancel the National Debt; in other words, that men may be paid for what costs much in what costs nothing. Now, it is true that there is little chance of sudden convulsion in this respect; the world will not so rapidly increase in wisdom as to despise gold on a sudden; and perhaps may [for a little time] desire it more eagerly the more easily it is obtained; nevertheless, the right of debt ought not to rest on a basis of imagination; nor should the frame of a national currency vibrate with every miser's panic, and every merchant's imprudence.

77. There are two methods of avoiding this insecurity, which would have been fallen upon long ago, if, instead of calculating the conditions of the supply of gold, men had only considered how the world might live and man-

age its affairs without gold at all.* One is, to base the currency on substances of truer intrinsic value; the other, to base it on several substances instead of one. If I can only claim gold, the discovery of a golden mountain starves me; but if I can claim bread, the discovery of a continent of corn-fields need not trouble me. If, however, I wish to exchange my bread for other things, a good harvest will for the time limit my power in this respect; but if I can claim either bread, iron, or silk at pleasure, the standard of value has three feet instead of one, and will be proportionately firm. Thus, ultimately, the steadiness of currency depends upon the breadth of its base; but the difficulty of organization increasing with this breadth, the discovery of the condition at once safest and most convenient † can only be by long analysis, which must for the present be deferred. Gold or silver ‡

* It is difficult to estimate the curious futility of discussions such as that which lately occupied a section of the British Association, on the absorption of gold, while no one can produce even the simplest of the data necessary for the inquiry. To take the first occurring one,—What means have we of ascertaining the weight of gold employed this year in the toilettes of the women of Europe (not to speak of Asia); and, supposing it known, what means of conjecturing the weight by which, next year, their fancies, and the changes of style among their jewellers, will diminish or increase it?

† See, in Pope's epistle to Lord Bathurst, his sketch of the difficulties and uses of a currency literally "pecuniary"—(consisting of herds of cattle.)

"His Grace will game—to White's a bull be led," &c.

‡ Perhaps both; perhaps silver only. It may be found expedient ultimately to leave gold free for use in the arts. As a means of reckoning, the standard might be, and in some cases has already been, entirely ideal.—*See* Mill's *Political Economy*, book iii. chap. VII. at beginning.

may always be retained in limited use, as a luxury of coinage and questionless standard, of one weight and alloy among all nations, varying only in the die. The purity of coinage, when metallic, is closely indicative of the honesty of the system of revenue, and even of the general dignity of the State.*

78. Whatever the article or articles may be which the national currency promises to pay, a premium on that article indicates bankruptcy of the government in that proportion, the division of its assets being restrained only by the remaining confidence of the holders of notes in the return of prosperity to the firm. Currencies of forced acceptance, or of unlimited issue, are merely various modes of disguising taxation, and delaying its pressure, until it is too late to interfere with the cause of pressure. To do away with the possibility of such disguise would have been among the first results of a true economical science, had any such existed; but there have been too many motives for the concealment, so long as it could by any artifices be maintained, to permit hitherto even the founding of such a science.

79. And indeed, it is only through evil conduct, wilfully persisted in, that there is any embarrassment, either in the theory or working of currency. No exchequer is

* The purity of the drachma and zecchin were not without significance of the state of intellect, art, and policy, both in Athens and Venice;—a fact first impressed upon me ten years ago, when, in taking daguerreotypes at Venice, I found no purchaseable gold pure enough to gild them with, except that of the old Venetian zecchin.

ever embarrassed, nor is any financial question difficult of solution, when people keep their practice honest, and their heads cool. But when governments lose all office of pilotage, protection, or scrutiny; and live only in magnificence of authorized larceny, and polished mendicity; or when the people, choosing Speculation (the *s* usually redundant in the spelling) instead of Toil, visit no dishonesty with chastisement, that each may with impunity take his dishonest turn;—there are no tricks of financial terminology that will save them; all signature and mintage do but magnify the ruin they retard; and even the riches that remain, stagnant or current, change only from the slime of Avernus to the sand of Phlegethon —*quick*sand at the embouchure;—land fluently recommended by recent auctioneers as "eligible for building leases."

80. Finally, then, the power of true currency is fourfold.

(1.) Credit power. Its worth in exchange, dependent on public opinion of the stability and honesty of the issuer.

(2.) Real worth. Supposing the gold, or whatever else the currency expressly promises, to be required from the issuer, for all his notes; and that the call cannot be met in full. Then the actual worth of the document would be, and its actual worth at any moment is, therefore to be defined as, what the division of the assets of the issuer would produce for it.

(3.) The exchange power of its base. Granting that we can get five pounds in gold for our note, it remains a question how much of other things we can get for five pounds in gold. The more of other things exist, and the less gold, the greater this power.

(4.) The power over labour, exercised by the given quantity of the base, or of the things to be got for it. The question in this case is, how much work, and (question of questions!) *whose* work, is to be had for the food which five pounds will buy. This depends on the number of the population, on their gifts, and on their dispositions, with which, down to their slightest humours, and up to their strongest impulses, the power of the currency varies.

81. Such being the main conditions of national currency, we proceed to examine those of the total currency, under the broad definition, "transferable acknowledgment of debt;" * among the many forms of which there

* Under which term, observe, we include all documents of debt which, being honest, might be transferable, though they practically are not transferred; while we exclude all documents which are in reality worthless, though in fact transferred temporarily, as bad money is. The document of honest debt, not transferred, is merely to paper currency as gold withdrawn from circulation is to that of bullion. Much confusion has crept into the reasoning on this subject from the idea that the withdrawal from circulation is a definable state, whereas it is a graduated state, and indefinable. The sovereign in my pocket is withdrawn from circulation as long as I choose to keep it there. It is no otherwise withdrawn if I bury it, nor even if I choose to make it, and others, into a golden cup, and drink out of them; since a rise in the price of the wine, or of other things, may at any time cause me to melt the cup and throw it back into currency; and the bullion operates on

are in effect only two, distinctly opposed; namely, the acknowledgments of debts which will be paid, and of debts which will not. Documents, whether in whole or part, of bad debt, being to those of good debt as bad money to bullion, we put for the present these forms of imposture aside (as in analysing a metal we should wash it clear of dross), and then range, in their exact quantities, the true currency of the country on one side, and the store or property of the country on the other. We place gold, and all such substances, on the side of documents, as far as they operate by signature;—on the side of store as far as they operate by value. Then the currency represents the quantity of debt in the country, and the store the quantity of its possession. The ownership of all the property is divided between the holders of currency and holders of store, and whatever the claiming value of the currency is at any moment, that value is to be deducted from the riches of the store-holders.

82. Farther, as true currency represents by definition

the prices of the things in the market as directly, though not as forcibly, while it is in the form of a cup as it does in the form of a sovereign. No calculation can be founded on my humour in either case. If I like to handle rouleaus, and therefore keep a quantity of gold, to play with, in the form of jointed basaltic columns, it is all one in its effect on the market as if I kept it in the form of twisted filigree, or, steadily "amicus lamnæ," beat the narrow gold pieces into broad ones, and dined off them. The probability is greater that I break the rouleau than that I melt the plate; but the increased probability is not calculable. Thus, documents are only withdrawn from the currency when cancelled, and bullion when it is so effectually lost as that the probability of finding it is no greater than of finding new gold in the mine.

debts which will be paid, it represents either the debtor's wealth, or his ability and willingness; that is to say, either wealth existing in his hands transferred to him by the creditor, or wealth which, as he is at some time surely to return it, he is either increasing, or, if diminishing, has the will and strength to reproduce. A sound currency therefore, as by its increase it represents enlarging debt, represents also enlarging means; but in this curious way, that a certain quantity of it marks the deficiency of the wealth of the country from what it would have been if that currency had not existed.* In this respect it is like the detritus of a mountain; assume that it lies at a fixed angle, and the more the detritus, the larger must be the mountain; but it would have been larger still, had there been none.

83. Farther, though, as above stated, every man possessing money has usually also some property beyond what is

* For example, suppose an active peasant, having got his ground into good order and built himself a comfortable house, finding time still on his hands, sees one of his neighbours little able to work, and ill-lodged, and offers to built him also a house, and to put his land in order, on condition of receiving for a given period rent for the building and tithe of the fruits. The offer is accepted, and a document given promissory of rent and tithe. This note is money. It can only be good money if the man who has incurred the debt so far recovers his strength as to be able to take advantage of the help he has received, and meet the demand of the note; if he lets his house fall to ruin, and his field to waste, his promissory note will soon be valueless: but the existence of the note at all is a consequence of his not having worked so stoutly as the other. Let him gain as much as to be able to pay back the entire debt; the note is cancelled, and we have two rich store-holders and no currency.

necessary for his immediate wants, and men possessing property usually also hold currency beyond what is necessary for their immediate exchanges, it mainly determines the class to which they belong, whether in their eyes the money is an adjunct of the property, or the property of the money. In the first case the holder's pleasure is in his possessions, and in his money subordinately, as the means of bettering or adding to them. In the second, his pleasure in his money, and in his possessions only as representing it. (In the first case the money is as an atmosphere surrounding the wealth, rising from it and raining back upon it; but in the second, it is as a deluge, with the wealth floating, and for the most part perishing in it.*) The shortest distinction between the men is that the one wishes always to buy, and the other to sell.

84. Such being the great relations of the classes, their several characters are of the highest importance to the nation; for on the character of the store-holders chiefly depend the preservation, display, and serviceableness of its wealth; on that of the currency-holders, its distribution; on that of both, its reproduction.

We shall, therefore, ultimately find it to be of incomparably greater importance to the nation in whose hands the thing is put than how much of it is got; and that the character of the holders may be conjectured

[* You need not trouble yourself to make out the sentence in parenthesis, unless you like, but do not think it is mere metaphor. It states a fact which I could not have stated so shortly, *but* by metaphor.]

by the quality of the store; for such and such a man always asks for such and such a thing; nor only asks for it, but if it can be bettered, betters it: so that possession and possessor reciprocally act on each other, through the entire sum of national possession. The base nation, asking for base things, sinks daily to deeper vileness of nature and weakness in use; while the noble nation, asking for noble things, rises daily into diviner eminence in both; the tendency to degradation being surely marked by "*ἀταξία*;" that is to say, (expanding the Greek thought), by carelessness as to the hands in which things are put, consequent dispute for the acquisition of them, disorderliness in accumulation of them, inaccuracy in estimate of them, and bluntness in conception as to the entire nature of possession.

85. The currency-holders always increase in number and influence in proportion to the bluntness of nature and clumsiness of the store-holders; for the less use people can make of things, the more they want of them, and the sooner weary of them, and want to change them for something else; and all frequency of change increases the quantity and power of currency. The large currency-holder himself is essentially a person who never has been able to make up his mind as to what he will have, and proceeds, therefore, in vague collection and aggregation, with more and more infuriate passion, urged by complacency in progress, vacancy in idea, and pride of conquest.

While, however, there is this obscurity in the nature of possession of currency, there is a charm in the seclusion of it, which is to some people very enticing. In the enjoyment of real property, others must partly share. The groom has some enjoyment of the stud, and the gardener of the garden; but the money is, or seems, shut up; it is wholly enviable. No one else can have part in any complacencies arising from it.

The power of arithmetical comparison is also a great thing to unimaginative people. They know always they are so much better than they were, in money; so much better than others, in money; but wit cannot be so compared, nor character. My neighbour cannot be convinced that I am wiser than he is, but he can, that I am worth so much more; and the universality of the conviction is no less flattering than its clearness. Only a few can understand,—none measure—and few will willingly adore, superiorities in other things; but everybody can understand money, everybody can count it, and most will worship it.

86. Now, these various temptations to accumulation would be politically harmless if what was vainly accumulated had any fair chance of being wisely spent. For as accumulation cannot go on for ever, but must some day end in its reverse—if this reverse were indeed a beneficial distribution and use, as irrigation from reservoir, the fever of gathering, though perilous to the gatherer, might be serviceable to the community

But it constantly happens (so constantly, that it may be stated as a political law having few exceptions), that what is unreasonably gathered is also unreasonably spent by the persons into whose hands it finally falls. Very frequently it is spent in war, or else in a stupifying luxury, twice hurtful, both in being indulged by the rich and witnessed by the poor. So that the *mal tener* and *mal dare* are as correlative as complementary colours; and the circulation of wealth, which ought to be soft, steady, strong, far-sweeping, and full of warmth, like the Gulf stream, being narrowed into an eddy, and concentrated on a point, changes into the alternate suction and surrender of Charybdis. Which is indeed, I doubt not, the true meaning of that marvellous fable, "infinite," as Bacon said of it, "in matter of meditation." *

87. It is a strange habit of wise humanity to speak in enigmas only, so that the highest truths and usefullest laws must be hunted for through whole picture-galleries of dreams, which to the vulgar seem dreams only. Thus Homer, the Greek tragedians, Plato, Dante, Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Goethe, have hidden all that is chiefly serviceable in their work, and in all the various literature they absorbed and re-embodied, under types which have rendered it quite useless to the multitude. What is worse,

[* What follows, to the end of the chapter, was a note only, in the first printing; but for after service, it is of more value than any other part of the book, so I have put it into the main text.]

the two primal declarers of moral discovery, Homer and Plato, are partly at issue; for Plato's logical power quenched his imagination, and he became incapable of understanding the purely imaginative element either in poetry or painting: he therefore somewhat overrates the pure discipline of passionate art in song and music, and misses that of meditative art. There is, however, a deeper reason for his distrust of Homer. His love of justice, and reverently religious nature, made him dread, as death, every form of fallacy; but chiefly, fallacy respecting the world to come (his own myths being only symbolic exponents of a rational hope). We shall perhaps now every day discover more clearly how right Plato was in this, and feel ourselves more and more wonderstruck that men such as Homer and Dante (and, in an inferior sphere, Milton), not to speak of the great sculptors and painters of every age, have permitted themselves, though full of all nobleness and wisdom, to coin idle imaginations of the mysteries of eternity, and guide the faiths of the families of the earth by the courses of their own vague and visionary arts: while the indisputable truths of human life and duty, respecting which they all have but one voice, lie hidden behind these veils of phantasy, unsought, and often unsuspected. I will gather carefully, out of Dante and Homer, what, in this kind, bears on our subject, in its due place; the first broad intention of their symbols may be sketched at once.

88. The rewards of a worthy use of riches, subordinate

to other ends, are shown by Dante in the fifth and sixth orbs of Paradise; for the punishment of their unworthy use, three places are assigned; one for the avaricious and prodigal whose souls are lost, (*Hell*, canto 7); one for the avaricious and prodigal whose souls are capable of purification, (*Purgatory*, canto 19); and one for the usurers, of whom *none* can be redeemed (*Hell*, canto 17). The first group, the largest in all hell ("gente piu che altrove troppa," compare Virgil's "quæ maxima turba"), meet in contrary currents, *as the waves of Charybdis*, casting weights at each other from opposite sides. This weariness of contention is the chief element of their torture; so marked by the beautiful lines beginning "Or puoi, figliuol," &c.: (but the usurers, who made their money inactively, *sit* on the sand, equally without rest, however. "Di qua, di la, soccorrien, &c.) For it is not avarice, but *contention* for riches, leading to this double misuse of them, which, in Dante's light, is the unredeemable sin. The place of its punishment is guarded by Plutus, "the great enemy," and "la fièra crudele," a spirit quite different from the Greek Plutus, who, though old and blind, is not cruel, and is curable, so as to become far-sighted. *νὺ τυφλὸς ἀλλ' ὀξὺ βλέπων.*—Plato's epithets in first book of the *Laws*.) Still more does this Dantesque type differ from the resplendent Plutus of Goethe in the second part of *Faust*, who is the personified power of wealth for good or evil—not the passion for wealth; and again from the Plutus of Spenser, who is the passion of mere aggrega-

tion. Dante's Plutus is specially and definitely the Spirit of Contention and Competition, or Evil Commerce; because, as I showed before, this kind of commerce "makes all men strangers;" his speech is therefore unintelligible, and no single soul of all those ruined by him *has recognizable features.*

On the other hand, the redeemable sins of avarice and prodigality are, in Dante's sight, those which are without deliberate or calculated operation. The lust, or lavishness, of riches can be purged, so long as there has been no servile consistency of dispute and competition for them. The sin is spoken of as that of degradation by the love of earth; it is purified by deeper humiliation—the souls crawl on their bellies; their chant is, "my soul cleaveth unto the dust." But the spirits thus condemned are all recognizable, and even the worst examples of the thirst for gold, which they are compelled to tell the histories of during the night, are of men swept by the passion of avarice into violent crime, but not sold to its steady work.

89. The precept given to each of these spirits for its deliverance is—Turn thine eyes to the lucre (lure) which the Eternal King rolls with the mighty wheels. Otherwise, the wheels of the "Greater Fortune," of which the constellation is ascending when Dante's dream begins. Compare George Herbert—

> "Lift up thy head;
> Take stars for money; stars, not to be told
> By any art, yet to be purchased."

And Plato's notable sentence in the third book of the *Polity* :—"Tell them they have divine gold and silver in their souls for ever; that they need no money stamped of men—neither may they otherwise than impiously mingle the gathering of the divine with the mortal treasure, *for through that which the law of the multitude has coined, endless crimes have been done and suffered; but in their's is neither pollution nor sorrow.*"

90. At the entrance of this place of punishment an evil spirit is seen by Dante, quite other than the "Gran Nemico." The great enemy is obeyed knowingly and willingly; but this spirit—feminine—and called a Siren—is the "*Deceitfulness* of riches," *ἀπάτη πλούτου* of the Gospels, winning obedience by guile. This is the Idol of riches, made doubly phantasmal by Dante's seeing her in a dream. She is lovely to look upon, and enchants by her sweet singing, but her womb is loathsome. Now, Dante does not call her one of the Sirens carelessly, any more than he speaks of Charybdis carelessly; and though he had got at the meaning of the Homeric fable only through Virgil's obscure tradition of it, the clue he has given us is quite enough. Bacon's interpretation, "the Sirens, *or pleasures*," which has become universal since his time, is opposed alike to Plato's meaning and Homer's. The Sirens are not pleasures, but *Desires :* in the Odyssey they are the phantoms of vain desire; but in Plato's Vision of Destiny, phantoms of divine desire; singing each a different note on the circles of the distaff of Necessity,

but forming one harmony, to which the three great Fates put words. Dante, however, adopted the Homeric conception of them, which was that they were demons of the Imagination, not carnal; (desire of the eyes; not lust of the flesh); therefore said to be daughters of the Muses. Yet not of the Muses, heavenly or historical, but of the Muse of pleasure; and they are at first winged, because even vain hope excites and helps when first formed; but afterwards, contending for the possession of the imagination with the Muses themselves, they are deprived of their wings.

91. And thus we are to distinguish the Siren power from the power of Circe, who is no daughter of the Muses, but of the strong elements, Sun and Sea; her power is that of frank, and full vital pleasure, which, if governed and watched, nourishes men; but, unwatched, and having no "moly," bitterness or delay, mixed with it, turns men into beasts, but does not slay them,—leaves them, on the contrary, power of revival. She is herself indeed an Enchantress;—pure Animal life; transforming —or degrading—but always wonderful (she puts the stores on board the ship invisibly, and is gone again, like a ghost); even the wild beasts rejoice and are softened around her cave; the transforming poisons she gives to men are mixed with no rich feast, but with pure and right nourishment,—Pramnian wine, cheese, and flour; that is, wine, milk, and corn, the three great sustainers of life—it is their own fault if these make swine of them; (see Ap

pendix V.) and swine are chosen merely as the type of consumption; as Plato's ὑῶν πόλις, in the second book of the *Polity*, and perhaps chosen by Homer with a deeper knowledge of the likeness in variety of nourishment, and internal form of body.

"Et quel est, s'il vous plait, cet audacieux animal qui se permet d'être bâti au dedans comme une jolie petite fille?

"Hélas! chère enfant, j'ai honte de le nommer, et il ne faudra pas m'en vouloir. C'est . . . c'est le cochon. Ce n'est pas précisément flatteur pour vous; mais nous en sommes tous là, et si cela vous contrarie par trop, il faut aller vous plaindre au bon Dieu qui a voulu que les choses fussent arrangées ainsi: seulement le cochon, qui ne pense qu'à manger, a l'estomac bien plus vaste que nous et c'est toujours une consolation."—(*Histoire d'une Bouchée de Pain*, Lettre ix.)

92. But the deadly Sirens are in all things opposed to the Circean power. They promise pleasure, but never give it. They nourish in no wise; but slay by slow death. And whereas they corrupt the heart and the head, instead of merely betraying the senses, there is no recovery from their power; they do not tear nor scratch, like Scylla, but the men who have listened to them are poisoned, and waste away. Note that the Sirens' field is covered, not merely with the bones, but with the *skins*, of those who have been consumed there. They address themselves, in the part of the song which Homer gives, not to the

passions of Ulysses, but to his vanity, and the only man who ever came within hearing of them, and escaped untempted, was Orpheus, who silenced the vain imaginations by singing the praises of the gods.

93. It is, then, one of these Sirens whom Dante takes as the phantasm or deceitfulness of riches; but note further, that she says it was her song that deceived Ulysses. Look back to Dante's account of Ulysses' death, and we find it was not the love of money, but pride of knowledge, that betrayed him; whence we get the clue to Dante's complete meaning: that the souls whose love of wealth is pardonable have been first deceived into pursuit of it by a dream of its higher uses, or by ambition. His Siren is therefore the Philotimé of Spenser, daughter of Mammon—

> "Whom all that folk with such contention
> Do flock about, my deare, my daughter is—
> Honour and dignitie from her alone
> Derived are."

By comparing Spenser's entire account of this Philotimé with Dante's of the Wealth-Siren, we shall get at the full meaning of both poets; but that of Homer lies hidden much more deeply. For his Sirens are indefinite; and they are desires of any evil thing; power of wealth is not specially indicated by him, until, escaping the harmonious danger of imagination, Ulysses has to choose between two practical ways of life, indicated by the two *rocks* of Scylla and Charybdis. The monsters that haunt

them are quite distinct from the rocks themselves, which, having many other subordinate significations, are in the main Labour and Idleness, or getting and spending; each with its attendant monster, or betraying demon. The rock of gaining has its summit in the clouds, invisible, and not to be climbed; that of spending is low, but marked by the cursed fig-tree, which has leaves, but no fruit. We know the type elsewhere; and there is a curious lateral allusion to it by Dante when Jacopo di Sant' Andrea, who had ruined himself by profusion and committed suicide, scatters the leaves of the bush of Lotto degli Agli, endeavouring to hide himself among them. We shall hereafter examine the type completely; here I will only give an approximate rendering of Homer's words, which have been obscured more by translation than even by tradition.

94. "They are overhanging rocks. The great waves of blue water break round them; and the blessed Gods call them the Wanderers.

"By one of them no winged thing can pass—not even the wild doves that bring ambrosia to their father Jove—but the smooth rock seizes its sacrifice of them." (Not even ambrosia to be had without Labour. The word is peculiar—as a part of anything is offered for sacrifice; especially used of heave-offering.) "It reaches the wide heaven with its top, and a dark blue cloud rests on it, and never passes; neither does the clear sky hold it, in summer nor in harvest. Nor can any man climb it—not if

he had twenty feet and hands, for it is smooth as though it were hewn.

"And in the midst of it is a cave which is turned the way of hell. And therein dwells Scylla, whining for prey: her cry, indeed, is no louder than that of a newly-born whelp: but she herself is an awful thing—nor can any creature see her face and be glad; no, though it were a god that rose against her. For she has twelve feet, all fore-feet, and six necks, and terrible heads on them; and each has three rows of teeth, full of black death.

"But the opposite rock is lower than this, though but a bow-shot distant; and upon it there is a great fig-tree, full of leaves; and under it the terrible Charybdis sucks down the black water. Thrice in the day she sucks it down, and thrice casts it up again; be not thou there when she sucks down, for Neptune himself could not save thee."

[Thus far went my rambling note, in *Fraser's Magazine*. The Editor sent me a compliment on it—of which I was very proud; what the Publisher thought of it, I am not informed; only I know that eventually he stopped the papers. I think a great deal of it myself, now, and have put it all in large print accordingly, and should like to write more; but will, on the contrary, self-denyingly, and in gratitude to any reader who has got through so much, end my chapter.]

CHAPTER IV.

COMMERCE.

95. As the currency conveys right of choice out of many things in exchange for one, so Commerce is the agency by which the power of choice is obtained; so that countries producing only timber can obtain for their timber silk and gold; or, naturally producing only jewels and frankincense, can obtain for them cattle and corn. In this function, commerce is of more importance to a country in proportion to the limitations of its products, and the restlessness of its fancy;—generally of greater importance towards Northern latitudes.

96. Commerce is necessary, however, not only to exchange local products, but local skill. Labour requiring the agency of fire can only be given abundantly in cold countries; labour requiring suppleness of body and sensitiveness of touch, only in warm ones; labour involving accurate vivacity of thought only in temperate ones; while peculiar imaginative actions are produced by extremes of heat and cold, and of light and darkness. The production of great art is limited to climates warm enough to admit of repose in the open air, and cool enough to render such repose delightful. Minor variations in modes of skill

distinguish every locality. The labour which at any place is easiest, is in that place cheapest; and it becomes often desirable that products raised in one country should be wrought in another. Hence have arisen discussions on "International values" which will be one day remembered as highly curious exercises of the human mind. For it will be discovered, in due course of tide and time, that international value is regulated just as inter-provincial or inter-parishional value is. Coals and hops are exchanged between Northumberland and Kent on absolutely the same principles as iron and wine between Lancashire and Spain. The greater breadth of an arm of the sea increases the cost, but does not modify the principle of exchange; and a bargain written in two languages will have no other economical results than a bargain written in one. The distances of nations are measured, not by seas, but by ignorances; and their divisions determined, not by dialects, but by enmities.*

97. Of course, a system of international values may always be constructed if we assume a relation of moral law to physical geography; as, for instance, that it is right to cheat or rob across a river, though not across a

[* I have repeated the substance of this and the next paragraph so often since, that I am ashamed and weary. The thing is too true, and too simple, it seems, for anybody ever to believe. Meantime, the theories of "international values," as explained by Modern Political Economy, have brought about last year's pillage of France by Germany, and the affectionate relations now existing in consequence between the inhabitants of the right and left banks of the Rhine.]

road; or across a sea, though not across a river, &c.;—again, a system of such values may be constructed by assuming similar relations of taxation to physical geography; as, for instance, that an article should be taxed in crossing a river, but not in crossing a road; or in being carried fifty miles, but not in being carried five, &c.; such positions are indeed not easily maintained when once put in logical form; but *one* law of international value is maintainable in any form: namely, that the farther your neighbour lives from you, and the less he understands you, *the more you are bound to be true in your dealings with him;* because your power over him is greater in proportion to his ignorance, and his remedy more difficult in proportion to his distance.*

98. I have just said the breadth of sea increases the cost of exchange. Now note that exchange, or commerce, *in itself*, is always costly; the sum of the value of the goods being diminished by the cost of their conveyance, and by the maintenance of the persons employed in it; so that it is only when there is advantage to both producers (in getting the one thing for the other) greater than the loss in conveyance, that the exchange is expedient. And it can only be justly conducted when the porters kept by the producers (commonly called merchants) expect *mere* pay, and not profit.† For in just commerce there are but

[* I wish some one would examine and publish accurately the late dealings of the Governors of the Cape with the Caffirs.]

[† By "pay," I mean wages for labour or skill; by "profit," gain dependent on the state of the market.]

three parties—the two persons or societies exchanging, and the agent or agents of exchange; the value of the things to be exchanged is known by both the exchangers, and each receives equal value, neither gaining nor losing (for whatever one gains the other loses). The intermediate agent is paid a known per-centage by both, partly for labour in conveyance, partly for care, knowledge, and risk; every attempt at concealment of the amount of the pay indicates either effort on the part of the agent to obtain unjust profit, or effort on the part of the exchangers to refuse him just pay. But for the most part it is the first, namely, the effort on the part of the merchant to obtain larger profit (so-called) by buying cheap and selling dear. Some part, indeed, of this larger gain is deserved, and might be openly demanded, because it is the reward of the merchant's knowledge, and foresight of probable necessity; but the greater part of such gain is unjust; and unjust in this most fatal way, that it depends, first, on keeping the exchangers ignorant of the exchange value of the articles; and, secondly, on taking advantage of the buyer's need and the seller's poverty. It is, therefore, one of the essential, and quite the most fatal, forms of usury; for usury means merely taking an exorbitant * sum for

[* Since I wrote this, I have worked out the question of interest of money, which always, until lately, had embarrassed and defeated me; and I find that the payment of interest of any amount whatever is real "usury," and entirely unjustifiable. I was shown this chiefly by the pamphlets issued by Mr. W. C. Sillar, though I greatly regret the impa

the use of anything; and it is no matter whether the exorbitance is on loan or exchange, on rent or on price—the essence of the usury being that it is obtained by advantage of opportunity or necessity, and not as due reward for labour. All the great thinkers, therefore, have held it to be unnatural and impious, in so far as it feeds on the distress of others, or their folly.* Nevertheless, attempts to repress it by law must for ever be ineffective; though Plato, Bacon, and the First Napoleon—all three of them men who knew somewhat more of humanity than the "British merchant" usually does—tried their hands at it, and have left some (probably) good moderative forms of law, which we will examine in their place. But the only final check upon it must be radical purifying of the national character, for being, as Bacon calls it, "concessum propter duritiem cordis," it is to be done away with by touching the heart only; not, however, without medicinal law—as in the case of the other permission, "propter duritiem." But in this more than in anything (though much in all, and though in this he would not himself allow of their application, for his own laws against usury are sharp enough), Plato's words in the fourth book of the Polity are true, that neither drugs, nor charms, nor burnings, will touch a deep-lying political sore, any more than a deep bodily one;

tience which causes Mr. Sillar to regard usury as the radical crime in political economy. There are others worse, that act with it.]

* Hence Dante's companionship of Cahors, *Inf.*, canto xi., supported by the view taken of the matter throughout the middle ages, in common with the Greeks.

but only right and utter change of constitution, and that "they do but lose their labour who think that by any tricks of law they can get the better of these mischiefs of commerce, and see not that they hew at a Hydra."

99. And indeed this Hydra seems so unslayable, and sin sticks so fast between the joinings of the stones of buying and selling, that "to trade" in things, or literally "cross-give" them, has warped itself, by the instinct of nations, into their worst word for fraud; for, because in trade there cannot but be trust, and it seems also that there cannot but also be injury in answer to it, what is merely fraud between enemies becomes treachery among friends: and "trader," "traditor," and "traitor" are but the same word. For which simplicity of language there is more reason than at first appears: for as in true commerce there is no "profit," so in true commerce there is no "sale." The idea of sale is that of an interchange between enemies respectively endeavouring to get the better one of another; but commerce is an exchange between friends; and there is no desire but that it should be just, any more than there would be between members of the same family.* The moment there is a bargain over the pottage, the family relation is dissolved:—typically, "the days of mourning for

[* I do not wonder when I re-read this, that people talk about my "sentiment." But there is no sentiment whatever in the matter. It is a hard and bare commercial fact, that if two people deal together who don't try to cheat each other, they will in a given time, make more money out of each other than if they do. See § 104.]

my father are at hand." Whereupon follows the resolve, "then will I slay my brother."

100. This inhumanity of mercenary commerce is the more notable because it is a fulfilment of the law that the corruption of the best is the worst. For as, taking the body natural for symbol of the body politic, the governing and forming powers may be likened to the brain, and the labouring to the limbs, the mercantile, presiding over circulation and communication of things in changed utilities, is symbolized by the heart; and, if that hardens, all is lost. And this is the ultimate lesson which the leader of English intellect meant for us, (a lesson, indeed, not all his own, but part of the old wisdom of humanity), in the tale of the *Merchant of Venice;* in which the true and incorrupt merchant,—*kind and free, beyond every other Shakspearian conception of men,*—is opposed to the corrupted merchant, or usurer; the lesson being deepened by the expression of the strange hatred which the corrupted merchant bears to the pure one, mixed with intense scorn,—

"This is the fool that lent out money gratis; look to him, jailer," (as to lunatic no less than criminal) the enmity, observe, having its symbolism literally carried out by being aimed straight at the heart, and finally foiled by a literal appeal to the great moral law that flesh and blood cannot be weighed, enforced by "Portia" * ("Portion"),

* Shakspeare would certainly never have chosen this name had he been forced to retain the Roman spelling. Like Perdita, "lost lady."

the type of divine Fortune, found, not in gold, nor in silver, but in lead, that is to say, in endurance and patience, not in splendour; and finally taught by her lips also, declaring, instead of the law and quality of "merces," the greater law and quality of mercy, which is not strained, but drops as the rain, blessing him that gives and him that takes. And observe that this "mercy" is not the mean "Misericordia," but the mighty "Gratia," answered by Gratitude, (observe Shylock's learning on the, to him detestable, word, *gratis*, and compare the relations of Grace to Equity given in the second chapter of the second book of the *Memorabilia ;*) that is to say, it is the gracious or loving, instead of the strained, or competing manner, of doing things, answered, not only with "merces" or pay, but with "merci" or thanks. And this is indeed

or Cordelia, "heart-lady," Portia is "fortune" lady. The two great relative groups of words, Fortuna, fero, and fors—Portio, porto, and pars (with the lateral branch, op-portune, im-portune, opportunity, &c.), are of deep and intricate significance; their various senses of bringing, abstracting, and sustaining being all centralized by the wheel (which bears and moves at once), or still better, the ball (spera) of Fortune,—"Volve sua spera, e beata si gode:" the motive power of this wheel distinguishing its goddess from the fixed majesty of Necessitas with her iron nails; or ἀνάγκη, with her pillar of fire and iridescent orbits, *fixed* at the centre. Portus and porta, and gate in its connexion with gain, form another interesting branch group; and Mors, the concentration of delaying, is always to be remembered with Fors, the concentration of bringing and bearing, passing on into Fortis and Fortitude.

[This note is literally a mere memorandum for the future work which I am now completing in *Fors Clavigera ;* it was printed partly in vanity, but also with real desire to get people to share the interest I found in the careful study of the leading words in noble languages. **Compare the next note.**]

the meaning of the great benediction "Grace, mercy, and peace," for there can be no peace without grace, (not even by help of rifled cannon), nor even without triplicity of graciousness, for the Greeks, who began but with one Grace, had to open their scheme into three before they had done.

101. With the usual tendency of long repeated thought, to take the surface for the deep, we have conceived these goddesses as if they only gave loveliness to gesture; whereas their true function is to give graciousness to deed, the other loveliness arising naturally out of that. In which function Charis becomes Charitas;* and has a

* As Charis becomes Charitas, the word "Cher," or "Dear," passes from Shylock's sense of it (to buy cheap and sell dear) into Antonio's sense of it: emphasized with the final *i* in tender "Cheri," and hushed to English calmness in our noble "Cherish." The reader must not think that any care can be misspent in tracing the connexion and power of the words which we have to use in the sequel. (See Appendix VI.) Much education sums itself in making men economize their words, and understand them. Nor is it possible to estimate the harm which has been done, in matters of higher speculation and conduct, by loose verbiage, though we may guess at it by observing the dislike which people show to having anything about their religion said to them in simple words, because then they understand it. Thus congregations meet weekly to invoke the influence of a Spirit of Life and Truth; yet if any part of that character were intelligibly expressed to them by the formulas of the service, they would be offended. Suppose, for instance, in the closing benediction, the clergyman were to give vital significance to the vague word "Holy," and were to say, "the fellowship of the Helpful and Honest Ghost be with you, and remain with you always," what would be the horror of many, first at the irreverence of so intelligible an expression; and secondly, at the discomfortable occurrence of the suspicion that while throughout the commercial dealings of the week they had denied the propriety of Help, and possibility of Honesty, the Person whose com-

name and praise even greater than that of Faith or Truth, for these may be maintained sullenly and proudly; but Charis is in her countenance always gladdening (Aglaia), and in her service instant and humble; and the true wife of Vulcan, or Labour. And it is not until her sincerity of function is lost, and her mere beauty contemplated instead of her patience, that she is born again of the foam flake, and becomes Aphrodité; and it is then only that she becomes capable of joining herself to war and to the enmities of men, instead of to labour and their services. Therefore the fable of Mars and Venus is chosen by Homer, picturing himself as Demodocus, to sing at the games in the court of Alcinous. Phæacia is the Homeric island of Atlantis; an image of noble and wise government, concealed, (how slightly!) merely by the change of a short vowel for a long one in the name of its queen; yet misunderstood by all later writers, (even by Horace, in his "pinguis, Phæaxque"). That fable expresses the perpetual error of men in thinking that grace and dignity can only be reached by the soldier, and never by the artisan; so that commerce and the useful arts have had the honour and beauty taken away, and only the Fraud and Pain left to them, with the lucre. Which is, indeed, one great reason of the continual blundering about the offices of government with respect to commerce. The higher classes are ashamed to employ themselves in it;

pany they had been now asking to be blessed with could have no fellowship with cruel people or knaves.

and though ready enough to fight for (or occasionally against) the people,—to preach to them,—or judge them, will not break bread for them; the refined upper servant who has willingly looked after the burnishing of the armoury and ordering of the library, not liking to set foot in the larder.

102. Farther still. As Charis becomes Charitas on the one side, she becomes—better still—Chara, Joy, on the other; or rather this is her very mother's milk and the beauty of her childhood; for God brings no enduring Love, nor any other good, out of pain; nor out of contention; but out of joy and harmony. And in this sense, human and divine, music and gladness, and the measures of both, come into her name; and Cher becomes full-vowelled Cheer, and Cheerful; and Chara opens into Choir and Choral.*

103. And lastly. As Grace passes into Freedom of action, Charis becomes Eleutheria, or Liberality; a form of liberty quite curiously and intensely different from the

* "τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα ζῶα οὐκ ἔχειν αἴσθησιν τῶν ἐν ταῖς κινήσεσι τάξεων οὐδὲ ἀταξιῶν, οἷς δὴ ῥυθμὸς ὄνομα καὶ ἁρμονία· ἡμῖν δὲ οὓς εἴπομεν τοὺς θεοὺς (Apollo, the Muses, and Bacchus—the grave Bacchus, that is—ruling the choir of age; or Bacchus restraining; 'sæva *tene*, cum Berecyntio cornu, tympana,' &c.) συγχορεύτας δέδοσθαι, τούτους εἶναι καὶ τοὺς δεδώκοτας τὴν ἔνρυθμόν τε καὶ ἐναρμόνιον αἴσθησιν μεθ' ἡδονῆς . . . χόρους τε ὠνομακέναι παρὰ τῆς χαρᾶς ἔμφυτον ὄνομα." "Other animals have no perception of order nor of disorder in motion; but for us, Apollo and Bacchus and the Muses are appointed to mingle in our dances; and these are they who have given us the sense of delight in rhythm and harmony. And the name of choir, choral dance, (we may believe,) came from chara (delight)."—*Laws*, book ii.

thing usually understood by "Liberty" in modern language: indeed, much more like what some people would call slavery: for a Greek always understood, primarily, by liberty, deliverance from the law of his own passions (or from what the Christian writers call bondage of corruption), and this a complete liberty: not being merely safe from the Siren, but also unbound from the mast, and not having to resist the passion, but making it fawn upon, and follow him—(this may be again partly the meaning of the fawning beasts about the Circean cave; so, again, George Herbert—

> Correct thy passion's spite,
> Then may the beasts draw thee to happy light)—

And it is only in such generosity that any man becomes capable of so governing others as to take true part in any system of national economy. Nor is there any other eternal distinction between the upper and lower classes than this form of liberty, Eleutheria, or benignity, in the one, and its opposite of slavery, Douleia, or malignity, in the other; the separation of these two orders of men, and the firm government of the lower by the higher, being the first conditions of possible wealth and economy in any state,—the Gods giving it no greater gift than the power to discern its true freemen, and "malignum spernere vulgus."

104. While I have traced the finer and higher laws of this matter for those whom they concern, I have also to

note the material law—vulgarly expressed in the proverb, "Honesty is the best policy." That proverb is indeed wholly inapplicable to matters of private interest. It is not true that honesty, as far as material gain is concerned, profits individuals. A clever and cruel knave will in a mixed society always be richer than an honest person can be. But Honesty is the best "policy," if policy mean practice of State. For fraud gains nothing in a State. It only enables the knaves in it to live at the expense of honest people; while there is for every act of fraud, however small, a loss of wealth to the community. Whatever the fraudulent person gains, some other person loses, as fraud produces nothing; and there is, *besides*, the loss of the time and thought spent in accomplishing the fraud, and of the strength otherwise obtainable by mutual help (not to speak of the fevers of anxiety and jealousy in the blood, which are a heavy physical loss, as I will show in due time). Practically, when the nation is deeply corrupt, cheat answers to cheat; every one is in turn imposed upon, and there is to the body politic the dead loss of the ingenuity, together with the incalculable mischief of the injury to each defrauded person, producing collateral effect unexpectedly. My neighbour sells me bad meat: I sell him in return flawed iron. We neither of us get one atom of pecuniary advantage on the whole transaction, but we both suffer unexpected inconvenience; my men get scurvy, and his cattle-truck runs off the rails.

105. The examination of this form of Charis must,

therefore, lead us into the discussion of the principles of government in general, and especially of that of the poor by the rich, discovering how the Graciousness joined with the Greatness, or Love with Majestas, is the true Dei Gratia, or Divine Right, of every form and manner of King; *i. e.*, specifically, of the thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, and powers of the earth:—of the thrones, stable, or "ruling," literally right-doing powers ("rex eris, recte si facies"):—of the dominations—lordly, edifying, dominant and harmonious powers; chiefly domestic, over the "built thing," domus, or house; and inherently twofold, Dominus and Domina; Lord and Lady:—of the Princedoms, pre-eminent, incipient, creative, and demonstrative powers; thus poetic and mercantile, in the "princeps carmen deduxisse" and the merchant-prince:—of the Virtues or Courages; militant, guiding, or Ducal powers:—and finally of the Strengths, or Forces pure; magistral powers, of the More over the less, and the forceful and fine over the weak and servile elements of life.

Subject enough for the next paper, involving "economical" principles of some importance, of which, for theme, here is a sentence, which I do not care to translate, for it would sound harsh in English,* though, truly, it is

[* My way now, is to say things plainly, if I can, whether they sound harsh or not;—this is the translation—"Is it possible, then, that as a horse is only a mischief to any one who attempts to use him without knowing how, so also our brother, if we attempt to use him without knowing how, may be a mischief to us?"]

one of the tenderest ever uttered by man; which may be meditated over, or rather *through*, in the meanwhile, by any one who will take the pains:—

Ἆρ' οὖν, ὥσπερ ἵππος τῷ ἀνεπιστήμονι μὲν ἐγχειροῦντι δὲ χρῆσθαι ζημία ἐστὶν, οὕτω καὶ ἀδελφὸς, ὅταν τις αὐτῷ μὴ ἐπιστάμενος ἐγχειρ χρῆσθαι, ζημία ἐστι;

CHAPTER V.

GOVERNMENT.

106. It remains for us, as I stated in the close of the last chapter, to examine first the principles of government in general, and then those of the government of the Poor by the Rich.

The government of a state consists in its customs, laws, and councils, and their enforcements.

I. Customs.

As one person primarily differs from another by fineness of nature, and, secondarily, by fineness of training, so also, a polite nation differs from a savage one, first, by the refinement of its nature, and secondly by the delicacy of its customs.

In the completeness of custom, which is the nation's self-government, there are three stages—first, fineness in method of doing or of being;—called the manner or moral of acts; secondly, firmness in holding such method after adoption, so that it shall become a habit in the character: *i. e.*, a constant "having" or "behaving;" and lastly, ethical power in performance and endurance, which

is the skill following on habit, and the ease reached by frequency of right doing.

The sensibility of the nation is indicated by the fineness of its customs; its courage, continence, and self-respect by its persistence in them.

By sensibility I mean its natural perception of beauty, fitness, and rightness; or of what is lovely, decent, and just: faculties dependent much on race, and the primal signs of fine breeding in man; but cultivable also by education, and necessarily perishing without it. True education has, indeed, no other function than the development of these faculties, and of the relative will. It has been the great error of modern intelligence to mistake science for education. You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not.

And making him what he will remain for ever: for no wash of weeds will bring back the faded purple. And in that dyeing there are two processes—first, the cleansing and wringing-out, which is the baptism with water; and then the infusing of the blue and scarlet colours, gentleness and justice, which is the baptism with fire.

107.* The customs and manners of a sensitive and highly-trained race are always Vital: that is to say, they are orderly manifestations of intense life, like the habitual action of the fingers of a musician. The customs and

[* Think over this paragraph carefully; it should have been much expanded to be quite intelligible; but it contains all that I want it to contain.]

manners of a vile and rude race, on the contrary, are conditions of decay: they are not, properly speaking, habits, but incrustations; not restraints, or forms, of life; but gangrenes, noisome, and the beginnings of death.

And generally, so far as custom attaches itself to indolence instead of action, and to prejudice instead of perception, it takes this deadly character, so that thus

> Custom hangs upon us with a weight
> Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life.

But that weight, if it become impetus, (living instead of dead weight) is just what gives value to custom, when it works *with* life, instead of against it.

108. The high ethical training of a nation implies perfect Grace, Pitifulness, and Peace; it is irreconcilably inconsistent with filthy or mechanical employments,—with the desire of money,—and with mental states of anxiety, jealousy, or indifference to pain. The present insensibility of the upper classes of Europe to the surrounding aspects of suffering, uncleanness, and crime, binds them not only into one responsibility with the sin, but into one dishonour with the foulness, which rot at their thresholds. The crimes daily recorded in the police-courts of London and Paris (and much more those which are *un*recorded) are a disgrace to the whole body politic; * they are, as in

* "The ordinary brute, who flourishes in the very centre of ornate life, tells us of unknown depths on the verge of which we totter, being bound to thank our stars every day we live that there is not a general

the body natural, stains of disease on a face of delicate skin, making the delicacy itself frightful. Similarly, the filth and poverty permitted or ignored in the midst of us are as dishonourable to the whole social body, as in the body natural it is to wash the face, but leave the hands and feet foul. Christ's way is the only true one: begin at the feet; the face will take care of itself.

109. Yet, since necessarily, in the frame of a nation, nothing but the head can be of gold, and the feet, for the work they have to do, must be part of iron, part of clay;—foul or mechanical work is always reduced by a noble race to the minimum in quantity; and, even then, performed and endured, not without sense of degradation, as a fine temper is wounded by the sight of the lower offices of the body. The highest conditions of human society reached hitherto have cast such work to slaves; but supposing slavery of a politically defined kind to be done away with, mechanical and foul employment must, in all highly organized states, take the aspect either of punishment or probation. All criminals should at once be set to the most dangerous and painful forms of it, especially to work in mines and at furnaces,* so as to relieve the innocent

outbreak, and a revolt from the yoke of civilization."—*Times* leader, Dec. 25, 1862. Admitting that our stars are to be thanked for our safety, whom are we to thank for the danger?

* Our politicians, even the best of them, regard only the distress caused by the *failure* of mechanical labour. The degradation caused by its excess is a far more serious subject of thought, and of future fear. I shall examine this part of our subject at length hereafter. There can

population as far as possible: of merely rough (not mechanical) manual labour, especially agricultural, *a large portion should be done by the upper classes;—bodily health, and sufficient contrast and repose for the mental*

hardly be any doubt, at present, cast on the truth of the above passages, as all the great thinkers are unanimous on the matter. Plato's words are terrific in their scorn and pity whenever he touches on the mechanical arts. He calls the men employed in them not even human, but partially and diminutively human, "*ἀνθρωπίσκοι*," and opposes such work to noble occupations, not merely as prison is opposed to freedom, but as a convict's dishonoured prison is to the temple (escape from them being like that of a criminal to the sanctuary); and the destruction caused by them being of soul no less than body.—*Rep.* vi. 9. Compare *Laws*, v. 11. Xenophon dwells on the evil of occupations at the furnace and especially their "*ἀσχολία*, want of leisure."—*Econ.* i. 4. (Modern England, with all its pride of education, has lost that first sense of the word "school;" and till it recover that, it will find no other rightly.) His word for the harm to the soul is to "break" it, as we say of the heart.—*Econ.* i. 6. And herein, also, is the root of the scorn, otherwise apparently most strange and cruel, with which Homer, Dante, and Shakspeare always speak of the populace; for it is entirely true that, in great states, the lower orders are low by nature as well as by task, being precisely that part of the commonwealth which has been thrust down for its coarseness or unworthiness (by coarseness I mean especially insensibility and irreverence—the "profane" of Horace); and when this ceases to be so, and the corruption and profanity are in the higher instead of the lower orders, there arises, first, helpless confusion; then, if the lower classes deserve power, ensues swift revolution, and they get it; but if neither the populace nor their rulers deserve it, there follows mere darkness and dissolution, till, out of the putrid elements, some new capacity of order rises, like grass on a grave; if not, there is no more hope, nor shadow of turning, for that nation. Atropos has her way with it.

So that the law of national health is like that of a great lake or sea, in perfect but slow circulation, letting the dregs fall continually to the lowest place, and the clear water rise; yet so as that there shall be no neglect of the lower orders, but perfect supervision and sympathy, so that if one member suffer, all members shall suffer with it.

functions, being unattainable without it; what necessarily inferior labour remains to be done, as especially in manufactures, should, and always will, when the relations of society are reverent and harmonious, fall to the lot of those who, for the time, are fit for nothing better. For as, whatever the perfectness of the educational system, there must remain infinite differences between the natures and capacities of men; and these differing natures are generally rangeable under the two qualities of lordly, (or tending towards rule, construction, and harmony), and servile (or tending towards misrule, destruction, and discord); and, since the lordly part is only in a state of profitableness while ruling, and the servile only in a state of redeemableness while serving, the whole health of the state depends on the manifest separation of these two elements of its mind; for, if the servile part be not separated and rendered visible in service, it mixes with, and corrupts, the entire body of the state; and if the lordly part be not distinguished, and set to rule, it is crushed and lost, being turned to no account, so that the rarest qualities of the nation are all given to it in vain.*

II. Laws.

110. These are the definitions and bonds of custom, or of what the nation desires should become custom.

* "*ὀλίγης, καὶ ἄλλως γιγνομένης.*" (Little, and that little born in vain.) The bitter sentence never was so true as at this day.

Law is either archic, (of appointment) meristic, (of division), or critic, (of judgment).

Archic law is that of appointment and precept: it defines what is and is not to be *done.*

Meristic law is that of balance and distribution: it defines what is and is not to be *possessed.*

Critic law is that of discernment and award: it defines what is and is not to be *suffered.*

111. A. Archic Law. If we choose to unite the laws of precept and distribution under the head of "statutes," all law is simply either of statute or judgment; that is, first the establishment of ordinance, and, secondly, the assignment of the reward, or penalty, due to its observance or violation.

To some extent these two forms of law must be associated, and, with every ordinance, the penalty of disobedience to it be also determined. But since the degrees

* [This following note is a mere cluster of memoranda, but I keep it for reference.] Thetic, or Thesmic, would perhaps be a better term than archic; but liable to be confused with some which we shall want relating to Theoria. The administrators of the three great divisions of law are severally Archons, Merists, and Dicasts. The Archons are the true princes, or beginners of things; or leaders (as of an orchestra). The Merists are properly the Domini, or Lords of houses and nations. The Dicasts, properly, the judges, and that with Olympian justice, which reaches to heaven and hell. The violation of archic law is ἁμαρτία (error), πονηρία (failure), or πλημμέλεια (discord). The violation of meristic law is ἀνομία (iniquity). The violation of critic law is ἀδικία (injury). Iniquity is the central generic term; for all law is *fatal;* it is the division to men of their fate; as the fold of their pasture, it is νόμος; as the assigning of their portion, μοῖρα.

and guilt of disobedience vary, the determination of due reward and punishment must be modified by discernment of special fact, which is peculiarly the office of the judge, as distinguished from that of the lawgiver and law-sustainer, or king; not but that the two offices are always theoretically, and in early stages, or limited numbers, of society, are often practically, united in the same person or persons.

112. Also, it is necessary to keep clearly in view the distinction between these two kinds of law, because the possible range of law is wider in proportion to their separation. There are many points of conduct respecting which the nation may wisely express its will by a written precept or resolve, yet not enforce it by penalty:* and the expedient degree of penalty is always quite a separate consideration from the expedience of the statute; for the statute may often be better enforced by mercy than severity, and is also easier in the bearing, and less likely to be abrogated. Farther, laws of precept have reference especially to youth, and concern themselves with training; but laws of judgment to manhood, and concern themselves with remedy and reward. There is a highly curious

[* This is the only sentence which, in revising these essays, I am now inclined to question; but the point is one of extreme difficulty. There might be a law, for instance, of curfew, that candles should be put out, unless for necessary service, at such and such an hour, the idea of "necessary service" being quite indefinable, and no penalty possible; yet there would be a distinct consciousness of illegal conduct in young ladies' minds who danced by candlelight till dawn.]

feeling of the English mind against educational law: we think no man's liberty should be interfered with till he has done irrevocable wrong; whereas it is then just too late for the only gracious and kingly interference, which is to hinder him from doing it. Make your education laws strict, and your criminal ones may be gentle; but, leave youth its liberty, and you will have to dig dungeons for age. And it is good for a man that he "wear the yoke in his youth:" for the reins may then be of silken thread; and with sweet chime of silver bells at the bridle; but, for the captivity of age, you must forge the iron fetter, and cast the passing bell.

113. Since no law can be, in a final or true sense, established, but by right, (all unjust laws involving the ultimate necessity of their own abrogation), the law-giving can only become a law-sustaining power in so far as it is Royal, or "right doing;"—in so far, that is, as it rules, not misrules, and orders, not dis-orders, the things submitted to it. Throned on this rock of justice, the kingly power becomes established and establishing; "*θεῖος*," or divine, and, therefore, it is literally true that no ruler can err, so long as he is a ruler, or *ἄρχων οὐδεὶς ἁμαρτάνει τότε ὅταν ἄρχων ᾖ*; perverted by careless thought, which has cost the world somewhat, into—"the king can do no wrong."

114. B. Meristic Law,* or that of the tenure of pro-

[* Read this and the next paragraph with attention; they contain clear statements, which I cannot mend, of things most necessary.]

polity, first determines what every individual possesses by right, and secures it to him; and what he possesses by wrong, and deprives him of it. But it has a far higher provisory function: it determines what every man *should* possess, and puts it within his reach on due conditions; and what he should *not* possess, and puts this out of his reach, conclusively.

115. Every article of human wealth has certain conditions attached to its merited possession; when these are unobserved, possession becomes rapine. And the object of meristic law is not only to secure to every man his rightful share (the share, that is, which he has worked for, produced, or received by gift from a rightful owner), but to enforce the due conditions of possession, as far as law may conveniently reach; for instance, that land shall not be wantonly allowed to run to waste, that streams shall not be poisoned by the persons through whose properties they pass, nor air be rendered unwholesome beyond given limits. Laws of this kind exist already in rudimentary degree, but need large development: the just laws respecting the possession of works of art have not hitherto been so much as conceived, and the daily loss of national wealth, and of its use, in this respect, is quite incalculable. And these laws need revision quite as much respecting property in national as in private hands. For instance: the public are under a vague impression that, because they have paid for the contents of the British Museum, every one has an equal right to see and to handle them. But the

public have similarly paid for the contents of Woolwich arsenal; yet do not expect free access to it, or handling of its contents. The British Museum is neither a free circulating library, nor a free school: it is a place for the safe preservation, and exhibition on due occasion, of unique books, unique objects of natural history, and unique works of art; its books can no more be used by everybody than its coins can be handled, or its statues cast. There ought to be free libraries in every quarter of London, with large and complete reading-rooms attached; so also free educational museums should be open in every quarter of London, all day long, until late at night, well lighted, well catalogued, and rich in contents both of art and natural history. But neither the British Museum nor National Gallery is a school; they are *treasuries;* and both should be severely restricted in access and in use. Unless some order of this kind is made, and that soon, for the MSS. department of the Museum, (its superintendents have sorrowfully told me this, and repeatedly), the best MSS. in the collection will be destroyed, irretrievably, by the careless and continual handling to which they are now subjected.

Finally, in certain conditions of a nation's progress, laws limiting accumulation of any kind of property may be found expedient.

116. C. CRITIC LAW determines questions of injury, and assigns due rewards and punishments to conduct.

Two curious economical questions arise laterally with respect to this branch of law, namely, the cost of crime, and the cost of judgment. The cost of crime is endured by nations ignorantly, that expense being nowhere stated in their budgets; the cost of judgment, patiently, (provided only it can be had pure for the money), because the science, or perhaps we ought rather to say the art, of law, is felt to found a noble profession and discipline; so that civilized nations are usually glad that a number of persons should be supported by exercise in oratory and analysis. But it has not yet been calculated what the practical value might have been, in other directions, of the intelligence now occupied in deciding, through courses of years, what might have been decided as justly, had the date of judgment been fixed, in as many hours. Imagine one half of the funds which any great nation devotes to dispute by law, applied to the determination of physical questions in medicine, agriculture, and theoretic science; and calculate the probable results within the next ten years!

I say nothing yet of the more deadly, more lamentable loss, involved in the use of purchased, instead of personal, justice—"*ἐπακτῷ παρ' ἄλλων —ἀπορίᾳ οἰκείων.*"

117. In order to true anylysis of critic law, we must understand the real meaning of the word "injury."

We commonly understand by it, any kind of harm done by one man to another; but we do not define the idea of harm: sometimes we limit it to the harm which the suf-

terer is conscious of; whereas much the worst injuries are those he is *un*conscious of; and, at other times, we limit the idea to violence, or restraint; whereas much the worse forms of injury are to be accomplished by indolence, and the withdrawal of restraint.

118. "Injury" is then simply the refusal, or violation of, any man's right or claim upon his fellows: which claim, much talked of in modern times, under the term "right," is mainly resolvable into two branches: a man's claim not to be hindered from doing what he should; and his claim to be hindered from doing what he should not; these two forms of hindrance being intensified by reward, help, and fortune, or Fors, on one side, and by punishment, impediment, and even final arrest, or Mors, on the other.

119. Now, in order to a man's obtaining these two rights, it is clearly needful that the *worth* of him should be approximately known; as well as the *want* of worth, which has, unhappily, been usually the principal subject of study for critic law, careful hitherto only to mark degrees of de-merit, instead of merit;—assigning, indeed, to the *De*ficiencies (not always, alas! even to these) just estimate, fine, or penalty; but to the *Ef*ficiencies, on the other side, which are by much the more interesting, as well as the only profitable part of its subject, assigning neither estimate nor aid.

120. Now, it is in this higher and perfect function of critic law, *en*abling instead of *dis*abling, that it becomes

truly Kingly, instead of Draconic: (what Providence gave the great, wrathful legislator his name?): that is, it becomes the law of man and of life, instead of the law of the worm and of death—both of these laws being set in changeless poise one against another, and the enforcement of both being the eternal function of the lawgiver, and true claim of every living soul: such claim being indeed strong to be mercifully hindered, and even, if need be, abolished, when longer existence means only deeper destruction, but stronger still to be mercifully helped, and recreated, when longer existence and new creation mean nobler life. So that reward and punishment will be found to resolve themselves mainly* into help and hindrance; and these again will issue naturally from true recognition of deserving, and the just reverence and just wrath which follow instinctively on such recognition.

121. I say, "follow," but, in reality, they are part of the recognition. Reverence is as instinctive as anger;—both of them instant on true vision: it is sight and understanding that we have to teach, and these *are* reverence. Make a man perceive worth, and in its reflection he sees his own relative unworth, and worships thereupon inevitably, not with stiff courtesy, but rejoicingly, passionately, and, best of all, *restfully*: for the inner capacity of awe and love is infinite in man; and only in finding these, can

[* Mainly; not altogether. Conclusive reward of high virtue is loving and crowning, not helping; and conclusive punishment of deep vice is hating and crushing, not merely hindering.]

we find peace. And the common insolences and petulances of the people, and their talk of equality, are not irreverence in them in the least, but mere blindness, stupefaction, and fog in the brains,* the first sign of any cleansing away of which is, that they gain some power of discerning, and some patience in submitting to, their true counsellors and governors. In the mode of such discernment consists the real "constitution" of the state, more than in the titles or offices of the discerned person; for it is no matter, save in degree of mischief, to what office a man is appointed, if he cannot fulfil it.

122. III. Government by Council.

This is the determination, by living authority, of the national consent to be observed under existing circumstances; and the modification or enlargement, abrogation or enforcement, of the code of national law according to present needs or purposes. This government is necessarily always by council, for though the authority of it may be vested in one person, that person cannot form any opinion on a matter of public interest but by (voluntarily or involuntarily) submitting himself to the influence of others.

This government is always twofold—visible and invisible.

* Compare Chaucer's "villany" (clownishness).

> Full foul and horlishe seemed she,
> And eke villanous for to see,
> And little could of norture
> To worship any creature.

The visible government is that which nominally carries on the national business; determines its foreign relations, raises taxes, levies soldiers, orders war or peace, and otherwise becomes the arbiter of the national fortune. The invisible government is that exercised by all energetic and intelligent men, each in his sphere, regulating the inner will and secret ways of the people, essentially forming its character, and preparing its fate.

Visible governments are the toys of some nations, the diseases of others, the harness of some, the burdens of more, the necessity of all. Sometimes their career is quite distinct from that of the people, and to write it, as the national history, is as if one should number the accidents which befall a man's weapons and wardrobe, and call the list his biography. Nevertheless, a truly noble and wise nation necessarily has a noble and wise visible government, for its wisdom issues in that conclusively.

123. Visible governments are, in their agencies, capable of three pure forms, and of no more than three.

They are either monarchies, where the authority is vested in one person; oligarchies, when it is vested in a minority; or democracies, when vested in a majority.

But these three forms are not only, in practice, variously limited and combined, but capable of infinite difference in character and use, receiving specific names according to their variations; which names, being nowise agreed upon, nor consistently used, either in thought or writing, no man can at present tell, in speaking of any kind of

government, whether he is understood; nor, in hearing, whether he understands. Thus we usually call a just government by one person a monarchy, and an unjust or cruel one, a tyranny: this might be reasonable if it had reference to the divinity of true government; but to limit the term "oligarchy" to government by a few rich people, and to call government by a few wise or noble people "aristocracy," is evidently absurd, unless it were proved that rich people never could be wise, or noble people rich; and farther absurd, because there are other distinctions in character, as well as riches or wisdom (greater purity of race, or strength of purpose, for instance), which may give the power of government to the few. So that if we had to give names to every group or kind of minority, we should have verbiage enough. But there is only one right name—"oligarchy."

124. So also the terms "republic" and "democracy" * are confused, especially in modern use; and both of them are liable to every sort of misconception. A republic means, properly, a polity in which the state, with its all, is at every man's service, and every man, with his all, at the state's service—(people are apt to lose sight of the last condition), but its government may nevertheless be oligarchic (consular, or decemviral, for instance), or monarchic (dictatorial). But a democracy means a state in which the

[* I leave this paragraph, in every syllable, as it was written, during the rage of the American war; it was meant to refer, however, chiefly to the Northerns: what modifications its hot and partial terms require I will give in another place: let it stand here as it stood.]

government rests directly with the majority of the citizens. And both these conditions have been judged only by such accidents and aspects of them as each of us has had experience of; and sometimes both have been confused with anarchy, as it is the fashion at present to talk of the "failure of republican institutions in America," when there has never yet been in America any such thing as an institution, but only defiance of institution; neither any such thing as a *res-publica*, but only a multitudinous *res-privata*; every man for himself. It is not republicanism which fails now in America; it is your model science of political economy, brought to its perfect practice. There you may see competition, and the "law of demand and supply" (especially in paper), in beautiful and unhindered operation.* Lust of wealth, and trust in it; vulgar faith in magnitude and multitude, instead of nobleness; besides that faith natural to backwoodsmen—"lucum ligna,"†—perpetual self-contemplation, issuing in passionate vanity; total ignorance of the finer and higher arts, and of all that they teach and bestow; and the discontent of energetic minds unoccupied, frantic with hope of uncompre-

* Supply and demand! Alas! for what noble work was there ever any audible "demand" in that poor sense (Past and Present)? Nay, the demand is not loud, even for ignoble work. *See* "Average Earnings of Betty Taylor,' in *Times* of 4th February of this year [1863]: "Worked from Monday morning at 8 A.M. to Friday night at 5.30 P.M. for 1*s.* 5½*d.*"—*Laissez faire.* [This kind of slavery finds no Abolitionists that I hear of.]

† "That the sacred grove is nothing but logs."]

hended change, and progress they know not whither; * — these are the things that have "failed" in America; and yet not altogether failed—it is not collapse, but collision; the greatest railroad accident on record, with fire caught from the furnace, and Catiline's quenching "non aquâ, sed ruinâ."† But I see not, in any of our talk of them, justice enough done to their erratic strength of purpose, nor any estimate taken of the strength of endurance of domestic sorrow, in what their women and children suppose a righteous cause. And out of that endurance and suffering, its own fruit will be born with time; [*not* abolition of slavery, however. See § 130.] and Carlyle's prophecy of them (June, 1850), as it has now come true in the first clause, will, in the last;—

"America, too, will find that caucuses, divisionalists, stump-oratory, and speeches to Buncombe will not carry men to the immortal gods; that the Washington Congress,

* Ames, by report of Waldo Emerson, says "that a monarchy is a merchantman, which sails well, but will sometimes strike on a rock, and go to the bottom; whilst a republic is a raft, which would never sink, but then your feet are always in the water." Yes, that is comfortable; and though your raft cannot sink (being too worthless for that), it may go to pieces, I suppose, when the four winds (your only pilots) steer competitively from its four corners, and carry it, ὡς ὀπωρινὸς Βορέης φορέησιν ἀκάνθας, and then more than your feet will be in the water.

[† "Not with water, but with ruin." The worst ruin being that which the Americans chiefly boast of. They sent all their best and honestest youths, Harvard University men and the like, to that accursed war; got them nearly all shot; wrote pretty biographies (to the ages of 17, 18, 19) and epitaphs for them; and so, having washed all the salt out of the nation in blood, left themselves to putrefaction, and the morality of New York.]

and constitutional battle of Kilkenny cats is there, as here, naught for such objects; quite incompetent for such; and, in fine, that said sublime constitutional arrangement will require to be (with awful throes, and travail such as few expect yet) remodelled, abridged, extended, suppressed, torn asunder, put together again;—not without heroic labour and effort, quite other than that of the stump-orator and the revival preacher, one day."

125.* Understand, then, once for all, that no form of government, provided it be a government at all, is, as such, to be either condemned or praised, or contested for in anywise, but by fools. But all forms of government are good just so far as they attain this one vital necessity of policy —*that the wise and kind, few or many, shall govern the unwise and unkind*; and they are evil so far as they miss of this, or reverse it. Nor does the form, in any case, signify one whit, but its *firmness*, and adaptation to the need; for if there be many foolish persons in a state, and few wise, then it is good that the few govern; and if there be many wise, and few foolish, then it is good that the many govern, and if many be wise, yet one wiser, then it is good that one should govern; and so on. Thus, we may have "the ant's republic, and the realm of bees," both good in their kind; one for groping, and the other for building; and nobler still, for flying,—the Ducal monarchy † of those

> Intelligent of seasons, that set forth
> The aery caravan, high over seas

[* This paragraph contains the gist of all that precedes.]

† Whenever you are puzzled by any apparently mistaken use

126. Nor need we want examples, among the inferior creatures, of dissoluteness, as well as resoluteness, in government. I once saw democracy finely illustrated by the beetles of North Switzerland, who by universal suffrage, and elytric acclamation, one May twilight, carried it, that they would fly over the Lake of Zug; and flew *short*, to the great disfigurement of the Lake of Zug,—*Καυθάρου λιμήν*—over some leagues square, and to the close of the cockchafer democracy for that year. Then, for tyranny, the old fable of the frogs and the stork finely touches one form of it; but truth will image it more closely than fable, for tyranny is not complete when it is only over the idle, but when it is over the laborious and the blind. This description of pelicans and climbing perch, which I find quoted in one of our popular natural histories, out of Sir Emerson Tennant's *Ceylon*, comes as near as may be to the true image of the thing:—

"Heavy rains came on, and as we stood on the high ground, we observed a pelican on the margin of the shallow pool gorging himself; our people went towards him, and raised a cry of 'Fish, fish!' We hurried down, and found numbers of fish struggling upward through the grass, in the rills formed by the trickling of the rain. There was scarcely water to cover them, but nevertheless

words in these essays, take your dictionary, remembering I had to fix terms, as well as principles. A Duke is a "dux" or "leader;" the flying wedge of cranes is under a "ducal monarch"—a very different personage from a queen-bee. The Venetians, with a beautiful instinct, gave the name to their King of the Sea.]

they made rapid progress up the bank, on which our fol lowers collected about two baskets of them. They were forcing their way up the knoll, and had they not been interrupted, first by the pelican, and afterwards by ourselves, they would in a few minutes have gained the highest point, and descended on the other side into a pool which formed another portion of the tank. In going this distance, however, they must have used muscular exertion enough to have taken them half a mile on level ground; for at these places all the cattle and wild animals of the neighbourhood had latterly come to drink, so that the surface was everywhere indented with footmarks, in addition to the cracks in the surrounding baked mud, into which the fish tumbled in their progress. In those holes, which were deep, and the sides perpendicular, they remained to die, and were carried off by kites and crows." *

127. But whether governments be bad or good, one general disadvantage seems to attach to them in modern times—that they are all *costly*.† This, however, is not essentially the fault of the governments. If nations choose to play at war, they will always find their governments willing to lead the game, and soon coming under that term of Aristophanes, "*κάπηλοι ἀσπίδων*," "shield-

[* This is a perfect picture of the French under the tyrannies of their Pelican Kings, before the Revolution. But they must find other than Pelican Kings—or rather, Pelican Kings of the Divine brood, that feed their children, and with their best blood.]

[† Read carefully, from this point; because here begins the statement of things requiring to be done, which I am now re-trying to make definite in *Fors Clavigera*.]

sellers." And when (πῆμ' ἐπὶ πήματι *) the shields take the form of iron ships, with apparatus "for defence against liquid fire,"—as I see by latest accounts they are now arranging the decks in English dockyards—they become costly biers enough for the grey convoy of chief mourner waves, wreathed with funereal foam, to bear back the dead upon; the massy shoulders of those corpse-bearers being intended for quite other work, and to bear the living, and food for the living, if we would let them.

128. Nor have we the least right to complain of our governments being expensive, so long as we set the government *to do precisely the work which brings no return.* If our present doctrines of political economy be just, let us trust them to the utmost; take that war business out of the government's hands, and test therein the principles of supply and demand. Let our future sieges of Sebastopol be done by contract—no capture, no pay—(I admit that things might sometimes go better so); and let us sell the commands of our prospective battles, with our vicarages, to the lowest bidder; so may we have cheap victories, and divinity. On the other hand, if we have so much suspicion of our science that we dare not trust it on military or spiritual business, would it not be but reasonable to try whether some authoritative handling may not prosper in matters utilitarian? If we were to set our governments to do useful things instead of mischievous, possibly even

[* "Evil on the top of Evil." Delphic oracle, meaning iron on the anvil.]

the apparatus itself might in time come to be less costly. The machine, applied to the building of he house, might perhaps pay, when it seems not to pay, applied to pulling it down. If we made in our dockyards ships to carry timber and coals, instead of cannon, and with provision for the brightening of domestic solid culinary fire, instead of for the scattering of liquid hostile fire, it might have some effect on the taxes. Or suppose that we tried the experiment on land instead of water carriage; already the government, not unapproved, carries letters and parcels for us; larger packages may in time follow; —even general merchandise—why not, at last, ourselves? Had the money spent in local mistakes and vain private litigation, on the railroads of England, been laid out, instead, under proper government restraint, on really useful railroad work, and had no absurd expense been incurred in ornamenting stations, we might already have had,—what ultimately it will be found we must have,—quadruple rails, two for passengers, and two for traffic, on every great line; and we might have been carried in swift safety, and watched and warded by well-paid pointsmen, for half the present fares. [For, of course, a railroad company is merely an association of turnpike-keepers, who make the tolls as high as they can, not to mend the roads with, but to pocket. The public will in time discover this, and do away with turnpikes on railroads, as on all other public-ways.]

129. Suppose it should thus turn out, finally, that a true

government set to true work, instead of being a costly engine, was a paying one? that your government, rightly organized, instead of itself subsisting by an income-tax, would produce its subjects some subsistence in the shape of an income dividend?—police, and judges duly paid besides, only with less work than the state at present provides for them.

A true government set to true work!—Not easily to be imagined, still less obtained; but not beyond human hope or ingenuity. Only you will have to alter your election systems somewhat, first. Not by universal suffrage, nor by votes purchasable with beer, is such government to be had. That is to say, not by universal *equal* suffrage. Every man upwards of twenty, who had been convicted of no legal crime, should have his say in this matter; but afterwards a louder voice, as he grows older, and approves himself wiser. If he has one vote at twenty, he should have two at thirty, four at forty, ten at fifty. For every single vote which he has with an income of a hundred a year, he should have ten with an income of a thousand, (provided you first see to it that wealth is, as nature intended it to be, the reward of sagacity and industry—not of good luck in a scramble or a lottery). For every single vote which he had as subordinate in any business, he should have two when he became a master; and every office and authority nationally bestowed, implying trustworthiness and intellect, should have its known proportional number of votes attached to it. But into the detail and

working of a true system in these matters we cannot now enter; we are concerned as yet with definitions only, and statements of first principles, which will be established now sufficiently for our purposes when we have examined the nature of that form of government last on the list in § 105,—the purely "Magistral," exciting at present its full share of public notice, under its ambiguous title of "slavery."

130. I have not, however, been able to ascertain in definite terms, from the declaimers against slavery, what they understand by it. If they mean only the imprisonment or compulsion of one person by another, such imprisonment or compulsion being in many cases highly expedient, slavery, so defined, would be no evil in itself, but only in its abuse; that is, when men are slaves, who should not be, or masters, who should not be, or even the fittest characters for either state, placed in it under conditions which should not be. It is not, for instance, a necessary condition of slavery, nor a desirable one, that parents should be separated from children, or husbands from wives; but the institution of war, against which people declaim with less violence, effects such separations,—not unfrequently in a very permanent manner. To press a sailor, seize a white youth by conscription for a soldier, or carry off a black one for a labourer, may all be right acts, or all wrong ones, according to needs and circumstances. It is wrong to scourge a man unnecessarily. So it is to shoot him. Both must be done on occasion;

and it is better and kinder to flog a man to his work, than to leave him idle till he robs, and flog him afterwards. The essential thing for all creatures is to be made to do right; how they are made to do it—by pleasant promises, or hard necessities, pathetic oratory, or the whip—is comparatively immaterial.* To be deceived is perhaps as incompatible with human dignity as to be whipped; and I suspect the last method to be not the worst, for the help of many individuals. The Jewish nation throve under it, in the hand of a monarch reputed not unwise; it is only the change of whip for scorpion which is inexpedient; and that change is as likely to come to pass on the side of license as of law. For the true scorpion whips are those of the nation's pleasant vices, which are to it as St. John's locusts—crown on the head, ravin in the mouth, and sting in the tail. If it will not bear the rule of Athena and Apollo, who shepherd without smiting (*οὐ πληγῇ νέμοντες*), Athena at last calls no more in the corners of the streets; and then follows the rule of Tisiphone, who smites without shepherding.

131. If, however, by slavery, instead of absolute compulsion, is meant *the purchase, by money, of the right of compulsion*, such purchase is necessarily made whenever a portion of any territory is transferred, for money, from one monarch to another: which has happened frequently

[* Permit me to enforce and reinforce this statement, with all earnestness. It is the sum of what needs most to be understood in the matter of education.]

enough in history, without its being supposed that the inhabitants of the districts so transferred became therefore slaves. In this, as in the former case, the dispute seems about the fashion of the thing, rather than the fact of it There are two rocks in mid-sea, on each of which, neglected equally by instructive and commercial powers, a handful of inhabitants live as they may. Two merchants bid for the two properties, but not in the same terms. One bids for the people, buys *them*, and sets them to work, under pain of scourge; the other bids for the rock, buys *it*, and throws the inhabitants into the sea. The former is the American, the latter the English method, of slavery; much is to be said for, and something against, both, which I hope to say in due time and place.*

132. If, however, slavery mean not merely the purchase of the right of compulsion, but *the purchase of the body and soul of the creature itself for money*, it is not, I think, among the black races that purchases of this kind are most extensively made, or that separate souls of a fine make fetch the highest price. This branch of the inquiry we shall have occasion also to follow out at some length, for in the worst instances of the selling of souls, we are apt to get, when we ask if the sale is valid, only Pyrrhon's answer†—"None can know."

133. The fact is that slavery is not a political institution

[* A pregnant paragraph, meant against English and Scotch landlords who drive their people off the land.]

[† In Lucian's dialogue, "The sale of lives."]

at all, *but an inherent, natural, and eternal inheritance* of a large portion of the human race—to whom, the more you give of their own free will, the more slaves they will make themselves. In common parlance, we idly confuse captivity with slavery, and are always thinking of the difference between pine-trunks (Ariel in the pine), and cowslip-bells ("in the cowslip-bell I lie"), or between carrying wood and drinking (Caliban's slavery and freedom), instead of noting the far more serious differences between Ariel and Caliban themselves, and the means by which, practically, that difference may be brought about or diminished.

134.* Plato's slave, in the *Polity*, who, well dressed and washed, aspires to the hand of his master's daughter, corresponds curiously to Caliban attacking Prospero's cell; and there is an undercurrent of meaning throughout, in the *Tempest* as well as in the *Merchant of Venice;* referring in this case to government, as in that to commerce. Miranda† ("the wonderful," so addressed first by Ferdi-

[* I raise this analysis of the *Tempest* into my text; but it is nothing but a hurried note, which I may never have time to expand. I have retouched it here and there a little, however.]

† Of Shakspeare's names I will afterwards speak at more length; they are curiously—often barbarously—much by Providence,—but assuredly not without Shakspeare's cunning purpose—mixed out of the various traditions he confusedly adopted, and languages which he imperfectly knew. Three of the clearest in meaning have been already noticed. Desdemona, "δυσδαιμονία," "miserable fortune," is also plain enough. Othello is, I believe, "the careful;" all the calamity of the tragedy arising from his single flaw and error in his magnificently collected strength. Ophelia, "serviceableness," the true lost wife of Hamlet, is marked as having a Greek name by that of her brother

nand, "Oh, you wonder!") corresponds to Homer's Arete Ariel and Caliban are respectively the spirits of faithful and imaginative labour, opposed to rebellious, hurtful, and slavish labour. Prospero ("for hope"), a true governor, is opposed to Sycorax, the mother of slavery, her name "Swine-raven," indicating at once brutality and deathfulness; hence the line—

"As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed, with *raven's feather*,"—&c.

For all these dreams of Shakspeare, as those of true and strong men must be, are "*φαντάσματα θεῖα, καὶ σκιαὶ τῶν ὄντων*"—divine phantasms, and shadows of things that are. We hardly tell our children, willingly, a fable with no purport in it; yet we think God sends his best messengers only to sing fairy tales to us, fond and empty. The *Tempest* is just like a grotesque in a rich missal, "clasped where paynims pray." Ariel is the spirit of generous and free-hearted service, in early stages of human society oppressed by ignorance and wild tyranny: venting groans as fast as mill-wheels strike; in shipwreck of states, dreadful;

Laertes; and its signification is once exquisitely alluded to in that brother's last word of her, where her gentle preciousness is opposed to the uselessness of the churlish clergy—"A *ministering* angel shall my sister be, when thou liest howling." Hamlet is, I believe, connected in some way with "homely," the entire event of the tragedy turning on betrayal of home duty. Hermione (*ἕρμα*), "pillar-like" (*ἤ εἶδος ἔχε χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης*). Titania (*τιτήνη*), "the queen;" Benedict and Beatrice, "blessed and blessing;" Valentine and Proteus, enduring (or strong), (valens), and changeful. Iago and Iachimo have evidently the same root—probably the Spanish Iago, Jacob, "the supplanter." Leonatus, and other such names, are interpreted, or played with, in the plays themselves. For the interpretation of Sycorax, and reference to her raven's feather, I am indebted to Mr. Osmond R. Wise

so that "all but mariners plunge in the brine, and quit the vessel, then all afire with *me*," yet having in itself the will and sweetness of truest peace, whence that is especially called "Ariel's" song, "Come unto these yellow sands, and there, *take hands*," "courtesied when you have, and kissed, the wild waves whist:" (mind, it is "cortesia," not "curtsey,") and read "quiet" for "whist," if you want the full sense. Then you may indeed foot it featly, and sweet spirits bear the burden for you—with watch in the night, and call in early morning. The *vis viva* in elemental transformation follows—"Full fathom five thy father lies, of his bones are coral made." Then, giving rest *after* labour, it "fetches dew from the still vext Bermoöthes, and, with a charm joined to their suffered labour, leaves men asleep." Snatching away the feast of the cruel, it seems to them as a harpy; followed by the utterly vile, who cannot see it in any shape, but to whom it is the picture of nobody, it still gives shrill harmony to their false and mocking catch, "Thought is free;" but leads them into briers and foul places, and at last hollas the hounds upon them. Minister of fate against the great criminal, it joins itself with the "incensed seas and shores"—the sword that layeth at it cannot hold, and may "with bemocked-at stabs as soon kill the still-closing waters, as diminish one dowle that is in its plume." As the guide and aid of true love, it is always called by Prospero "fine" (the French "fine," not the English), or "delicate"—another long note would be needed to explain all the meaning in this word. Lastly

the work done, and war, it resolves itself into the elements. The ultimate significance of the last song, "Where the bee sucks," I will examine in its due place.

The types of slavery in Caliban are more palpable, and need not be dwelt on now: though I will notice them also, severally, in their proper places;—the heart of his slavery in his worship: "That's a brave god, and bears celestial—liquor." But, in illustration of the sense in which the Latin "benignus" and "malignus" are to be coupled with Eleutheria and Douleia, note that Caliban's torment is always the physical reflection of his own nature—"cramps" and "side stitches that shall pen thy breath up; thou shalt be pinched, as thick as honeycombs:" the whole nature of slavery being one cramp and cretinous contraction. Fancy this of Ariel! You may fetter him, but you set no mark on him; you may put him to hard work and far journey, but you cannot give him a cramp.

135. I should dwell, even in these prefatory papers, at more length on this subject of slavery, had not all I would say been said already, in vain, (not, as I hope, ultimately in vain), by Carlyle, in the first of the *Latter-day Pamphlets*, which I commend to the reader's gravest reading; together with that as much neglected, and still more immediately needed, on model prisons, and with the great chapter on "Permanence" (fifth of the last section of "Past and Present"), which sums what is known, and foreshadows, or rather forelights, all that is to be learned of National Discipline. I have only here farther to examine the no

t ıre of one world-wide and everlasting form of slavery wholesome in use, as deadly in abuse ;—the service of the ıich by the voor

CHAPTER VI.

MASTERSHIP.

136 As in all previous discussions of our subject, we must study the relation of the commanding rich to the obeying poor in its simplest elements, in order to reach its first principles.

The simplest state of it, then, is this:* a wise and provident person works much, consumes little, and lays by a store; an improvident person works little, consumes all his produce, and lays by no store. Accident interrupts the daily work, or renders it less productive; the idle person must then starve, or be supported by the provident one, who, having him thus at his mercy, may either refuse to maintain him altogether, or, which will evidently be more to his own interest, say to him, "I will maintain you, indeed, but you shall now work hard, instead of indolently, and instead of being allowed to lay by what you save, as you might have done, had you remained independent, *I* will take all the surplus. You would not lay it up for yourself; it is wholly your own fault that has thrown you

* In the present general examination I concede so much to ordinary economists as to ignore all *innocent* poverty. I adapt my reasoning, for once, to the modern English practical mind, by assuming poverty to be always criminal; the conceivable exceptions we will examine afterwards.

into my power, and I will force you to work, or starve; yet you shall have no profit of your work, only your daily bread for it; [and competition shall determine how much of that *]." This mode of treatment has now become so universal that it is supposed to be the only natural—nay, the only possible one; and the market wages are calmly defined by economists as "the sum which will maintain the labourer."

137. The power of the provident person to do this is only checked by the correlative power of some neighbour of similarly frugal habits, who says to the labourer—"I will give you a little more than this other provident person: come and work for me."

The power of the provident over the improvident depends thus, primarily, on their relative numbers; secondarily, on the modes of agreement of the adverse parties with each other. The accidental level of wages is a variable function of the number of provident and idle persons in the world, of the enmity between them as classes, and of the agreement between those of the same class. *It depends, from beginning to end, on moral conditions.*

138. Supposing the rich to be entirely selfish, *it is always for their interest that the poor should be as numerous as they can employ, and restrain.* For, granting that the entire population is no larger than the ground can

[* I have no terms of English, and can find none in Greek nor Latin, nor in any other strong language known to me, contemptuous enough to attach to the bestial idiotism of the modern theory that wages are to be measured by competition.]

easily maintain—that the classes are stringently divided—and that there is sense or strength of hand enough with the rich to secure obedience; then, if nine-tenths of a nation are poor, the remaining tenth have the service of nine persons each;* but, if eight-tenths are poor, only of four each; if seven-tenths are poor, of two and a third each; if six-tenths are poor, of one and a half each; and if five-tenths are poor, of only one each. But, practically, if the rich strive always to obtain more power over the poor, instead of to raise them—and if, on the other hand, the poor become continually more vicious and numerous, through neglect and oppression,—though the *range* of the power of the rich increases, its *tenure* becomes less secure; until, at last, the measure of iniquity being full, revolution, civil war, or the subjection of the state to a healthier or stronger one, closes the moral corruption, and industrial disease.†

139. It is rarely, however, that things come to this extremity. Kind persons among the rich, and wise among the poor, modify the connexion of the classes: the efforts made to raise and relieve on the one side, and the

* I say nothing yet of the quality of the servants, which, nevertheless, is the gist of the business. Will you have Paul Veronese to paint your ceiling, or the plumber from over the way? Both will work for the same money; Paul, if anything, a little the cheaper of the two, if you keep him in good humour; only you have to discern him first, which will need eyes.

[† I have not altered a syllable in these three paragraphs, 137, 138, 139, on revision; but have much italicised: the principles stated being as vital, as they are little known.]

success of honest toil on the other, bind and blend the orders of society into the confused tissue of half-felt obligation, sullenly-rendered obedience, and variously-directed, or mis-directed, toil, which form the warp of daily life. But this great law rules all the wild design: that success (while society is guided by laws of competition) *signifies always so much victory over your neighbour* as to obtain the direction of his work, and to take the profits of it. *This is the real source of all great riches.* No man can become largely rich by his personal toil.* The work of his own hands, wisely directed, will indeed always maintain himself and his family, and make fitting provision for his age. *But it is only by the discovery of some method of taxing the labour of others that he can become opulent.* Every increase of his capital enables him to extend this taxation more widely; that is, to invest larger funds in the maintenance of labourers,—to direct, accordingly, vaster and yet vaster masses of labour, and to appropriate its profits.

140. There is much confusion of idea on the subject of this appropriation. It is, of course, the interest of the employer to disguise it from the persons employed; and, for his own comfort and complacency, he often desires no less to disguise it from himself. And it is matter of much doubt with me, how far the foul and foolish arguments

* By his art he may; but only when its produce, or the sight or hearing of it, becomes a subject of dispute, so as to enable the artist to tax the labour of multitudes highly, in exchange for his own.

used habitually on this subject are indeed the honest expression of foul and foolish convictions;—or rather (as I am sometimes forced to conclude from the irritation with which they are advanced) are resolutely dishonest, wilful, and malicious sophisms, arranged so as to mask, to the last moment, the real laws of economy, and future duties of men. By taking a simple example, and working it thoroughly out, the subject may be rescued from all but such determined misrepresentation.

141. Let us imagine a society of peasants, living on a river-shore, exposed to destructive inundation at somewhat extended intervals; and that each peasant possesses of this good, but imperilled, ground, more than he needs to cultivate for immediate subsistence. We will assume farther (and with too great probability of justice), that the greater part of them indolently keep in tillage just as much land as supplies them with daily food;—that they leave their children idle, and take no precautions against the rise of the stream. But one of them, (we will say but one, for the sake of greater clearness) cultivates carefully *all* the ground of his estate; makes his children work hard and healthily; uses his spare time and theirs in building a rampart against the river; and, at the end of some years, has in his storehouses large reserves of food and clothing, —in his stables a well-tended breed of cattle, and around his fields a wedge of wall against flood.

The torrent rises at last—sweeps away the harvests, and half the cottages of the careless peasants, and leaves them

destitute. They naturally come for help to the provident one, whose fields are unwasted, and whose granaries are full. He has the right to refuse it to them: no one disputes this right.* But he will probably *not* refuse it; it is not his interest to do so, even were he entirely selfish and cruel. The only question with him will be on what terms his aid is to be granted.

142. Clearly, not on terms of mere charity. To maintain his neighbours in idleness would be not only his ruin, but theirs. He will require work from them, in exchange for their maintenance; and, whether in kindness or cruelty, all the work they can give. Not now the three or four hours they were wont to spend on their own land, but the eight or ten hours they ought to have spent.† But how will he apply this labour? The men are now his slaves; —nothing less, and nothing more. On pain of starvation, he can force them to work in the manner, and to the end, he chooses. And it is by his wisdom in this choice that the worthiness of his mastership is proved, or its unworthiness. Evidently, he must first set them to bank out the water in some temporary way, and to get their ground cleansed and resown; else, in any case, their continued maintenance will be impossible. That done, and while he has still to feed them, suppose he makes them raise a

[* Observe this; the legal right to keep what you have worked for, and use it as you please, is the corner-stone of all economy: compare the end of Chap. II.]

[† I should now put the time of necessary labour rather under than over the third of the day.]

secure rampart for their own ground against all future flood, and rebuild their houses in safer places, with the best material they can find; being allowed time out of their working hours to fetch such material from a distance. And for the food and clothing advanced, he takes security in land that as much shall be returned at a convenient period.

143. We may conceive this security to be redeemed, and the debt paid at the end of a few years. The prudent peasant has sustained no loss; *but is no richer than he was, and has had all his trouble for nothing.* But he has enriched his neighbours materially; bettered their houses, secured their land, and rendered them, in worldly matters, equal to himself. In all rational and final sense, he has been throughout their true Lord and King.

144. We will next trace his probable line of conduct, presuming his object to be exclusively the increase of his own fortune. After roughly recovering and cleansing the ground, he allows the ruined peasantry only to build huts upon it, such as he thinks protective enough from the weather to keep them in working health. The rest of their time he occupies, first in pulling down, and rebuilding on a magnificent scale, his own house, and in adding large dependencies to it. This done, in exchange for his continued supply of corn, he buys as much of his neighbours' land as he thinks he can superintend the management of; and makes the former owners securely embank and protect the ceded portion. By this arrangement, he

leaves to a certain number of the peasantry only as much ground as will just maintain them in their existing numbers; as the population increases, he takes the extra hands, who cannot be maintained on the narrowed estates, for his own servants; employs some to cultivate the ground he has bought, giving them of its produce merely enough for subsistence; with the surplus, which, under his energetic and careful superintendence, will be large, he maintains a train of servants for state, and a body of workmen, whom he educates in ornamental arts. He now can splendidly decorate his house, lay out its grounds magnificently, and richly supply his table, and that of his household and retinue. And thus, without any abuse of right, we should find established all the phenomena of poverty and riches, which (it is supposed necessarily) accompany modern civilization. In one part of the district, we should have unhealthy land, miserable dwellings, and half-starved poor; in another, a well-ordered estate, well-fed servants, and refined conditions of highly-educated and luxurious life.

145. I have put the two cases in simplicity, and to some extremity. But though in more complex and qualified operation, all the relations of society are but the expansion of these two typical sequences of conduct and result. I do not say, observe, that the first procedure is entirely recommendable; or even entirely right; still less, that the second is wholly wrong. Servants, and artists, and splendour of habitation and retinue, have all their use, pro

priety, and office. But I am determined that the reader shall understand clearly what they cost; and see that the condition of having them is the subjection to us of a certain number of imprudent or unfortunate persons (or, it may be, more fortunate than their masters), over whose destinies we exercise a boundless control. "Riches" mean ternally and essentially this; and God send at last a time when those words of our best-reputed economist shall be true, and we *shall* indeed "all know what it is to be rich;"* that it is to be slave-master over farthest earth, and over all ways and thoughts of men. Every operative you employ is your true servant: distant or near, subject to your immediate orders, or ministering to your widely-communicated caprice,—for the pay he stipulates, or the price he tempts,—all are alike under this great dominion of the gold. The milliner who makes the dress is as much a servant (more so, in that she uses more intelligence in the service) as the maid who puts it on; the carpenter who smooths the door, as the footman who opens it; the tradesmen who supply the table, as the labourers and sailors who supply the tradesmen. Why speak of these lower services? Painters and singers (whether of note or rhyme,) jesters and story-tellers, moralists, historians, priests,—so far as these, in any degree, paint, or sing, or tell their tale, or charm their charm, or "perform" their rite, *for pay*,—in so far, they are all slaves; abject utterly, if the service be for pay

[* See Preface to *Unto this Last*.]

only; abject less and less in proportion to the degrees of love and of wisdom which enter into their duty, or *can* enter into it, according as their function is to do the bidding and the work of a manly people;—or to amuse, tempt, and deceive, a childish one.

146. There is always, in such amusement and temptation, to a certain extent, a government of the rich by the poor, as of the poor by the rich; but the latter is the prevailing and necessary one, and it consists, when it is honourable, in the collection of the profits of labour from those who would have misused them, and the administration of those profits for the service either of the same persons in future, or of others; and when it is dishonourable, as is more frequently the case in modern times, it consists in the collection of the profits of labour from those who would have rightly used them, and their appropriation to the service of the collector himself.

147. The examination of these various modes of collection and use of riches will form the third branch of our future inquiries; but the key to the whole subject lies in the clear understanding of the difference between selfish and unselfish expenditure. It is not easy, by any course of reasoning, to enforce this on the generally unwilling hearer; yet the definition of unselfish expenditure is brief and simple. It is expenditure which, if you are a capitalist, does not pay *you*, but pays somebody else; and if you are a consumer, does not please *you*, but pleases somebody else. Take one special instance, in further illustration of

the general type given above. I did not invent that type, but spoke of a real river, and of real peasantry, the languid and sickly race which inhabits, or haunts—for they are often more like spectres than living men—the thorny desolation of the banks of the Arve in Savoy. Some years ago, a society, formed at Geneva, offered to embank the river for the ground which would have been recovered by the operation; but the offer was refused by the (then Sardinian) government. The capitalists saw that this expenditure would have "paid" if the ground saved from the river was to be theirs. But if, when the offer that had this aspect of profit was refused, they had nevertheless persisted in the plan, and merely taking security for the return of their outlay, lent the funds for the work, and thus saved a whole race of human souls from perishing in a pestiferous fen (as, I presume, some among them would, at personal risk, have dragged any one drowning creature out of the current of the stream, and not expected payment therefor), such expenditure would have precisely corresponded to the use of his power made, in the first instance, by our supposed richer peasant—it would have been the king's, of grace, instead of the usurer's, for gain.

148. "Impossible, absurd, Utopian!" exclaim nine-tenths of the few readers whom these words may find.

No, good reader, *this* is not Utopian: but I will tell you what would have seemed, if we had not seen it, Utopian on the side of evil instead of good; that ever

men should have come to value their money so much more than their lives, that if you call upon them to become soldiers, and take chance of a bullet through their heart, and of wife and children being left desolate, for their pride's sake, they will do it gaily, without thinking twice; but if you ask them, for their country's sake, to spend a hundred pounds without security of getting back a hundred-and-five,* they will laugh in your face.

149. Not but that also this game of life-giving and taking is, in the end, somewhat more costly than other forms of play might be. Rifle practice is, indeed, a not unhealthy pastime, and a feather on the top of the head is a pleasing appendage; but while learning the stops and fingering of the sweet instrument, does no one ever calcu-

* I have not hitherto touched on the subject of interest of money; it is too complex, and must be reserved for its proper place in the body of the work. The definition of interest (apart from compensation for risk) is, "the exponent of the comfort of accomplished labour, separated from its power;" the power being what is lent: and the French economists who have maintained the entire illegality of interest are wrong; yet by no means so curiously or wildly wrong as the English and French ones opposed to them, whose opinions have been collected by Dr. Whewell at page 41 of his *Lectures;* it never seeming to occur to the mind of the compiler, any more than to the writers whom he quotes, that it is quite possible, and even (according to Jewish proverb) prudent, for men to hoard as ants and mice do, for use, not usury; and lay by something for winter nights, in the expectation of rather sharing than lending the scrapings. My Savoyard squirrels would pass a pleasant time of it under the snow-laden pine-branches, if they always declined to economize because no one would pay them interest on nuts.

[I leave this note as it stood: but, as I have above stated, should now side wholly with the French economists spoken of, in asserting the absolute illegality of interest.]

late the cost of an overture? What melody does Tityrus meditate on his tenderly spiral pipe? The leaden seed of it, broad-cast, true conical "Dents de Lion" seed—needing less allowance for the wind than is usual with that kind of herb—what crop are you likely to have of it? Suppose, instead of this volunteer marching and countermarching, you were to do a little volunteer ploughing and counter-ploughing? It is more difficult to do it straight: the dust of the earth, so disturbed, is more grateful than for merely rhythmic footsteps. Golden cups, also, given for good ploughing, would be more suitable in colour: (ruby glass, for the wine which "giveth his colour" on the ground, might be fitter for the rifle prize in ladies' hands). Or, conceive a little volunteer exercise with the spade, other than such as is needed for moat and breastwork, or even for the burial of the fruit of the leaden avena-seed, subject to the shrill Lemures' criticism—

Wer hat das Haus so schlecht gebanet?

If you were to embank Lincolnshire more stoutly against the sea? or strip the peat of Solway, or plant Plinlimmon moors with larch—then, in due season, some amateur reaping and threshing?

"Nay, we reap and thresh by steam, in these advanced days."

I know it, my wise and economical friends. The stout arms God gave you to win your bread by, you would fain

shoot your neighbours, and God's sweet singers with; * then you invoke the fiends to your farm-service; and—

> When young and old come forth to play
> On a sulphurous holiday,
> Tell how the darkling goblin sweat
> (His feast of cinders duly set),
> And, belching night, where breathed the morn,
> His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
> That ten day-labourers could not end.

150. Going back to the matter in hand, we will press the example closer. On a green knoll above that plain of the Arve, between Cluse and Bonneville, there was, in the year 1860, a cottage, inhabited by a well-doing family—man and wife, three children, and the grandmother. I call it a cottage, but in truth, it was a large chimney on the ground, wide at the bottom, so that the family might live round the fire; lighted by one small broken window, and entered by an unclosing door. The family, I say, was

* Compare Chaucer's feeling respecting birds (from Canace's falcon, to the nightingale, singing, "Domine, labia—" to the Lord of Love) with the usual modern British sentiments on this subject. Or even Cowley's:—

> "What prince's choir of music can excel
> That which within this shade does dwell,
> To which we nothing pay, or give,
> They, like all other poets, live
> Without reward, or thanks for their obliging pains!
> 'Tis well if they become not prey."

Yes; it is better than well; particularly since the seed sown by the wayside has been protected by the peculiar appropriation of part of the church-rates in our country parishes. See the remonstrance from

"well-doing;" at least, it was hopeful and cheerful; the wife healthy, the children, for Savoyards, pretty and active, but the husband threatened with decline, from exposure under the cliffs of the Mont Vergi by day, and to draughts between every plank of his chimney in the frosty nights.

"Why could he not plaster the chinks?" asks the practical reader. For the same reason that your child cannot wash its face and hands till you have washed them many a day for it, and will not wash them when it can, till you force it.

151. I passed this cottage often in my walks, had its window and door mended; sometimes mended also a little the meal of sour bread and broth, and generally got kind greeting and smile from the face of young or old; which greeting, this year, narrowed itself into the half-recognizing stare of the elder child, and the old woman's tears; for the father and mother were both dead,—one of sickness, the other of sorrow. It happened that I passed not alone, but with a companion, a practised English joiner,

a "Country Parson," in *The Times* of June 4th (or 5th; the letter is dated June 3rd.) 1862:—"I have heard at a vestry meeting a good deal of higgling over a few shillings' outlay in cleaning the church; but I have never heard any dissatisfaction expressed on account of that part of the rate which is invested in 50 or 100 dozens of birds' heads."

[If we could trace the innermost of all causes of modern war, I believe it would be found, not in the avarice nor ambition of nations, but in the mere idleness of the upper classes. **They have nothing to do but to teach the peasantry to kill each other.**]

who, while these people were dying of cold, had been employed from six in the morning to six in the evening, for two months, in fitting, without nails, the panels of a single door in a large house in London. Three days of his work taken, at the right time, from fastening the oak panels with useless precision, and applied to fasten the larch timbers with decent strength, would have saved these Savoyards' lives. *He* would have been maintained equally; (I suppose him equally paid for his work by the owner of the greater house, only the work not consumed selfishly on his own walls;) and the two peasants, and eventually, probably their children, saved.

152. There are, therefore,—let me finally enforce, and leave with the reader, this broad conclusion,—three things to be considered in employing any poor person. It is not enough to give him employment. You must employ him first to produce useful things; secondly, of the several (suppose equally useful) things he can equally well produce, you must set him to make that which will cause him to lead the healthiest life; lastly, of the things produced, it remains a question of wisdom and conscience how much you are to take yourself, and how much to leave to others. A large quantity, remember, unless you destroy it, *must* always be so left at one time or another; the only questions you have to decide are, not *what* you will give, but *when*, and *how*, and *to whom*, you will give. The natural law of human life is, of course, that in youth a man shall labour and lay by store for his old age, and when age

comes, shall use what he has laid by, gradually slackening his toil, and allowing himself more frank use of his store; taking care always to leave himself as much as will surely suffice for him beyond any possible length of life. What he has gained, or by tranquil and unanxious toil continues to gain, more than is enough for his own need, he ought so to administer, while he yet lives, as to see the good of it again beginning, in other hands; for thus he has himself the greatest sum of pleasure from it, and faithfully uses his sagacity in its control. Whereas most men, it appears, dislike the sight of their fortunes going out into service again, and say to themselves,—"I can indeed nowise prevent this money from falling at last into the hands of others, nor hinder the good of it from becoming theirs, not mine; but at least let a merciful death save me from being a witness of their satisfaction; and may God so far be gracious to me as to let no good come of any of this money of mine before my eyes."

153. Supposing this feeling unconquerable, the safest way of rationally indulging it would be for the capitalist at once to spend all his fortune on himself, which might actually, in many cases, be quite the rightest as well as the pleasantest thing to do, if he had just tastes and worthy passions. But, whether for himself only, or through the hands, and for the sake, of others also, the law of wise life is, that the maker of the money should also be the spender of it, and spend it, approximately, all, before he dies; so that his true ambition as an economist should be,

to die, not as rich, but as poor, as possible,* calculating the ebb tide of possession in true and calm proportion to the ebb tide of life. Which law, checking the wing of accumulative desire in the mid-volley,† and leading to peace of possession and fulness of fruition in old age, is also wholesome, in that by the freedom of gift, together with present help and counsel, it at once endears and dignifies age in the sight of youth, which then no longer strips the bodies of the dead, but receives the grace of the living. Its chief use would (or will be, for men are indeed capable of attaining to this much use of their reason), that some temperance and measure will be put to the acquisitiveness of commerce.‡ For as things stand, a man holds it his duty to be temperate in his food, and of his body, but for no duty to be temperate in his riches, and of his mind. He sees that he ought not to waste his

[* See the *Life of Fenelon.* "The labouring peasantry were at all times the objects of his tenderest care; his palace at Cambray, with all his books and writings, being consumed by fire, he bore the misfortune with unruffled calmness, and said it was better his palace should be burnt than the cottage of a poor peasant." (These thoroughly good men always go too far, and lose their power over the mass.) He died exemplifying the mean he had always observed between prodigality and avarice, leaving neither debts nor money.]

† *καὶ πενίαν ἡγουμένους εἶναι μὴ τὸ τὴν οὐσίαν ἐλάττω ποιεῖν ἀλλὰ τὸ τὴν ἀπληστίαν πλείω.* "And thinking (wisely) that poverty consists not in making one's possessions less, but one's avarice more."—*Laws*, v. 8. Read the context, and compare. "He who spends for all that is noble and gains by nothing but what is just, will hardly be notably wealthy, or distressfully poor."—*Laws*, v. 42.

‡ The fury of modern trade arises chiefly out of the possibility of making sudden fortunes by largeness of transaction, and accident of discovery or contrivance. I have no doubt that the final interest

youth and his flesh for luxury; but he will waste his age, and his soul, for money, and think he does no wrong, nor know the *delirium tremens* of the intellect for disease. But the law of life is, that a man should fix the sum he desires to make annually, as the food he desires to eat daily; and stay when he has reached the limit, refusing increase of business, and leaving it to others, so obtaining due freedom of time for better thoughts.* How the gluttony of business is punished, a bill of health for the principals of the richest city houses, issued annually, would show in a sufficiently impressive manner.

154. I know, of course, that these statements will be received by the modern merchant as an active border rider of the sixteenth century would have heard of its being proper for men of the Marches to get their living by the spade, instead of the spur. But my business is only to state veracities and necessities; I neither look for the acceptance of the one, nor hope for the nearness of the other. Near or distant, the day *will* assuredly come when the merchants of a state shall be its true ministers of exchange, its porters, in the double sense of carriers and gate-keepers, bringing all lands into frank and faithful

of every nation is to check the action of these commercial lotteries; and that all great accidental gains or losses should be national,— not individual. But speculation absolute, unconnected with commercial effort, is an unmitigated evil in a state, and the root of countless evils beside.

[* I desire in the strongest terms to reinforce all that is contained in this paragraph.]

communication, and knowing for their master of guild, Hermes the herald, instead of Mercury the gain-guarder.

155. And now, finally, for immediate rule to all who will accept it.

The distress of any population means that they need food, house-room, clothes, and fuel. You can never, therefore, be wrong in employing any labourer to produce food, house-room, clothes, or fuel; but you are *always* wrong if you employ him to produce nothing, (for then some other labourer must be worked double time to feed him); and you are generally wrong, at present, if you employ him (unless he can do nothing else) to produce works of art or luxuries; because modern art is mostly on a false basis, and modern luxury is criminally great.*

* It is especially necessary that the reader should keep his mind fixed on the methods of consumption and destruction, as the true sources of national poverty. Men are apt to call every exchange "expenditure," but it is only consumption which IS expenditure. A large number of the purchases made by the richer classes are mere forms of interchange of unused property, wholly without effect on national prosperity. It matters nothing to the state whether, if a china pipkin be rated as worth a hundred pounds, A has the pipkin and B the pounds, or A the pounds and B the pipkin. But if the pipkin is pretty, and A or B breaks it, there is national loss, not otherwise. So again, when the loss has really taken place, no shifting of the shoulders that bear it will do away with the reality of it. There is an intensely ludicrous notion in the public mind respecting the abolishment of debt by denying it. When a debt is denied, the lender loses instead of the borrower, that is all; the loss is precisely, accurately, everlastingly the same. The Americans borrow money to spend in blowing up their own houses. They deny their debt, by one-third already [1863], gold being at fifty premium; and they will probably deny it wholly. That merely means that the holders of the notes are to be the losers instead of the issuers. The quantity of loss is precisely equal, and irrevocable; it is the quantity of human industry

156. The way to produce more food is mainly to bring in fresh ground, and increase facilities of carriage;—to break rock, exchange earth, drain the moist, and water the dry, to mend roads, and build harbours of refuge. Taxation thus spent will annihilate taxation, but spent in war, it annihilates revenue.

157. The way to produce house-room is to apply your force first to the humblest dwellings. When your bricklayers are out of employ, do not build splendid new streets, but better the old ones; send your paviours and slaters to the poorest villages, and see that your poor are healthily lodged, before you try your hand on stately architecture. You will find its stateliness rise better under the trowel afterwards; and we do not yet build so well that we need hasten to display our skill to future ages. Had the labour which has decorated the Houses of Parliament filled, instead, rents in walls and roofs throughout the county of Middlesex; and our deputies met to talk within massive walls that would have needed no stucco for five hundred years,—the decoration might have been afterwards, and the talk now. And touching even our highly conscientious church building, it may be well to remember that in the best days of church plans, their masons called themselves "logeurs du bon Dieu;" and that since, according to the most trusted reports God spends a good deal

spent in effecting the explosion, plus the quantity of goods exploded. Honour only decides *who* shall pay the sum lost not whether it is to be paid or not. Paid it must be, and to the uttermost farthing.

of His time in cottages as well as in churches, He might perhaps like to be a little better lodged there also.

158. The way to get more clothes is—not, necessarily, to get more cotton. There were words written twenty years ago * which would have saved many of us some shivering, had they been minded in time. Shall we read them again?

"The Continental people, it would seem, are importing our machinery, beginning to spin cotton, and manufacture for themselves; to cut us out of this market, and then out of that! Sad news, indeed; but irremediable. By no means the saddest news—the saddest news, is that we should find our national existence, as I sometimes hear it said, depend on selling manufactured cotton at a farthing an ell cheaper than any other people. A most narrow stand for a great nation to base itself on! A stand which, with all the Corn-law abrogations conceivable, I do not think will be capable of enduring.

"My friends, suppose we quitted that stand; suppose we came honestly down from it and said—'This is our minimum of cotton prices; we care not, for the present, to make cotton any cheaper. Do you, if it seem so blessed to you, make cotton cheaper. Fill your lungs with cotton fur, your heart with copperas fumes, with rage and mutiny,

[* (*Past and Present*, Chap. IX. of Third Section.) To think that for these twenty—now twenty-six—years, this one voice of Carlyle's has been the only faithful and useful utterance in all England, and has sounded through all these years in vain! See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter X.]

become ye the general gnomes of Europe, slaves of the lamp!' I admire a nation which fancies it will die if it do not undersell all other nations to the end of the world. Brothers, we will cease to undersell them; we will be content to equal-sell them; to be happy selling equally with them! I do not see the use of underselling them: cotton-cloth is already twopence a yard, or lower; and yet bare backs were never more numerous among us. Let inventive men cease to spend their existence incessantly contriving how cotton can be made cheaper; and try to invent a little how cotton at its present cheapness could be somewhat justlier divided among us.

"Let inventive men consider—whether the secret of this universe does after all consist in making money. With a hell which means—'failing to make money,' I do not think there is any heaven possible that would suit one well. In brief, all this Mammon gospel of supply-and-demand, competition, *laissez faire*, and devil take the hindmost (foremost, is it not, rather, Mr. Carlyle?), 'begins to be one of the shabbiest gospels ever preached.'"

159. The way to produce more fuel* is first to make your coal mines safer, by sinking more shafts; then set all your convicts to work in them, and if, as is to be hoped, you succeed in diminishing the supply of that sort of labourer, consider what means there may be, first,

[* We don't want to produce more fuel just now, but much less; and to use what we get for cooking and warming ourselves, instead of for running from place to place.]

of growing forest where its growth will improve climate; secondly, of splintering the forests which now make continents of fruitful land pathless and poisonous, into fagots for fire;—so gaining at once dominion icewards and sunwards. Your steam power has been given (you will find eventually) for work such as that: and not for excursion trains, to give the labourer a moment's breath, at the peril of his breath for ever, from amidst the cities which it has crushed into masses of corruption. When you know how to build cities, and how to rule them, you will be able to breathe in their streets, and the "excursion" will be the afternoon's walk or game in the fields round them.

160. "But nothing of this work will pay?"

No; no more than it pays to dust your rooms, or wash your doorsteps. It will pay; not at first in currency, but in that which is the end and the source of currency,—in life; (and in currency richly afterwards). It will pay in that which is more than life,—in light, whose true price has not yet been reckoned in any currency, and yet into the image of which, all wealth, one way or other, must be cast. For your riches must either be as the lightning, which,

> Begot but in a cloud,
> Though shining bright, and speaking loud,
> Whilst it begins, concludes its violent race;
> And, where it gilds, it wounds the place;—

or else, as the lightning of the sacred sign, which shines from one part of the heaven to the other. There is no

other choice; you must either take dust for deity, spectre for possession, fettered dream for life, and for epitaph, this reversed verse of the great Hebrew hymn of economy (Psalm cxii.):—"He hath gathered together, he hath stripped the poor, his iniquity remaineth for ever:"—or else, having the sun of justice to shine on you, and the sincere substance of good in your possession, and the pure law and liberty of life within you, leave men to write this better legend over your grave:—

"He hath dispersed abroad. He hath given to the poor. His righteousness remaineth for ever."

APPENDICES.

[I HAVE brought together in these last pages a few notes, which were not properly to be incorporated with the text, and which, at the bottom of pages, checked the reader's attention to the main argument. They contain, however, several statements to which I wish to be able to refer, or have already referred, in other of my books, so that I think right to preserve them.]

APPENDIX I.—(p. 6.)

THE greatest of all economists are those most opposed to the doctrine of "laissez faire," namely, the fortifying virtues, which the wisest men of all time have arranged under the general heads of Prudence, or Discretion (the spirit which discerns and adopts rightly); Justice (the spirit which rules and divides rightly); Fortitude (the spirit which persists and endures rightly); and Temperance (the spirit which stops and refuses rightly). These cardinal and sentinel virtues are not only the means of protecting and prolonging life itself, but they are the chief guards, or sources, of the material means of life, and the governing powers and princes of economy. Thus, precisely according to the number of just men in a nation, is their power of avoiding either intestine or foreign war All disputes may be

peaceably settled, if a sufficient number of persons have been trained to submit to the principles of justice, while the necessity for war is in direct ratio to the number of unjust persons who are incapable of determining a quarrel but by violence. Whether the injustice take the form of the desire of dominion, or of refusal to submit to it, or of lust of territory, or lust of money, or of mere irregular passion and wanton will, the result is economically the same;—loss of the quantity of power and life consumed in repressing the injustice, added to the material and moral destruction caused by the fact of war. The early civil wars of England, and the existing* war in America, are curious examples—these under monarchical, this under republican, institutions—of the results on large masses of nations of the want of education in principles of justice. But the mere dread or distrust resulting from the want of the inner virtues of Faith and Charity prove often no less costly than war itself. The fear which France and England have of each other costs each nation about fifteen millions sterling annually, besides various paralyses of commerce; that sum being spent in the manufacture of means of destruction instead of means of production. There is no more reason in the nature of things that France and England should be hostile to each other than that England and Scotland should be, or Lancashire and Yorkshire; and the reciprocal terrors of the opposite sides of the English Channel are neither more necessary, more economical, nor more virtuous, than the old riding and reiving on the opposite flanks of the Cheviots, or than England's own weaving for herself of crowns of thorn, from the stems of her Red and White roses.

[* Written in 1862. I little thought that when I next corrected my type, the "existing" war best illustrative of the sentence, would be between Frenchmen in the Elysian Fields of Paris.]

APPENDIX II.—(p. 26.)

FEW passages of the book which at least some part of the nations at present most advanced in civilization accept as an expression of final truth, have been more distorted than those bearing on Idolatry. For the idolatry there denounced is neither sculpture, nor veneration of sculpture. It is simply the substitution of an "Eidolon," phantasm, or imagination of Good, for that which is real and enduring; from the Highest Living Good, which gives life, to the lowest material good which ministers to it. The Creator, and the things created, which He is said to have "seen good" in creating, are in this their eternal goodness appointed always to be "worshipped,"—*i. e.*, to have goodness and worth ascribed to them from the heart; and the sweep and range of idolatry extend to the rejection of any or all of these, "calling evil good, and good evil,—putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." * For in that rejection and substitution we betray the first of all Loyalties, to the fixed Law of life, and with resolute opposite loyalty serve our own imagination of good, which is the law, not of the House, but of the Grave, (otherwise called the law of "mark missing," which we translate "law of Sin"); these "two masters," between whose services we have to choose, being otherwise distinguished as God and Mammon, which Mammon, though we narrowly take it as the power of money only, is in truth the great evil Spirit of false and fond desire, or "Covetousness, which is Idolatry." So that Iconoclasm—*image*-breaking—is easy; but an Idol cannot be broken—it must be forsaken; and this is not so easy, either to do, or persuade to doing. For men may readily be convinced of the weakness of an image; but not of the emptiness of an imagination.

* Compare the close of the Fourth Lecture in *Aratra Pentelici*.

APPENDIX III.—(p. 30.)

I HAVE not attempted to support, by the authority of other writers, any of the statements made in these papers; indeed, if such authorities were rightly collected, there would be no occasion for my writing at all. Even in the scattered passages referring to this subject in three books of Carlyle's—Sartor Resartus, Past and Present, and the Latter Day Pamphlets,—all has been said that needs to be said, and far better than I shall ever say it again. But the habit of the public mind at present is to require everything to be uttered diffusely, loudly, and a hundred times over, before it will listen; and it has revolted against these papers of mine as if they contained things daring and new, when there is not one assertion in them of which the truth has not been for ages known to the wisest, and proclaimed by the most eloquent of men. It would be [I had written *will* be; but have now reached a time of life for which there is but one mood--the conditional,] a far greater pleasure to me hereafter, to collect their words than to add to mine; Horace's clear rendering of the substance of the passages in the text may be found room for at once,

> Si quis emat citharas, emptas comportet in unum
> Nec studio citharae, nec Musae deditus ulli;
> Si scalpra et formas non sutor, nautica vela
> Aversus mercaturis, delirus et amens
> Undique dicatur merito. Qui discrepat istis
> Qui nummos aurumque recondit, nescius uti
> Compositis; metuensque velut contingere sacrum?

[Which may be roughly thus translated:—

"Were anybody to buy fiddles, and collect a number, being in no wise given to fiddling, nor fond of music: or if, being no cobbler, he collected awls and lasts, or, having no mind for sea-adventure, bought sails, every one would call him a madman, and deservedly.

But what difference is there between such a man and one who lays by coins and gold, and does not know how to use, when he has got them?"]

With which it is perhaps desirable also to give Xenophon's statement, it being clearer than any English one can be, owing to the power of the general Greek term for wealth, "useable things."

[I have cut out the Greek because I can't be troubled to correct the accents, and am always nervous about them; here it is in English, as well as I can do it:—

"This being so, it follows that things are only property to the man who knows how to use them; as flutes, for instance, are property to the man who can pipe upon them respectably; but to one who knows not how to pipe, they are no property, unless he can get rid of them advantageously. . . For if they are not sold, the flutes are no property (being serviceable for nothing); but, sold, they become property. To which Socrates made answer,—'and only then if he knows how to sell them, for if he sell them to another man who cannot play on them, still they are no property.'"]

APPENDIX IV.—(p. 34.)

THE reader is to include here in the idea of "Government," any branch of the Executive, or even any body of private persons, entrusted with the practical management of public interests unconnected directly with their own personal ones. In theoretical discussions of legislative interference with political economy, it is usually, and of course unnecessarily, assumed that Government must be always of that form and force in which we have been accustomed to see it;—that its abuses can never be less, nor its wisdom greater, nor

its powers more numerous. But, practically, the custom in most civilized countries is, for every man to deprecate the interference of Government as long as things tell for his personal advantage, and to call for it when they cease to do so. The request of the Manchester Economists to be supplied with cotton by Government (the system of supply and demand having, for the time, fallen sorrowfully short of the expectations of scientific persons from it), is an interesting case in point. It were to be wished that less wide and bitter suffering, suffering, too, of the innocent, had been needed to force the nation, or some part of it, to ask itself why a body of men, already confessedly capable of managing matters both military and divine, should not be permitted, or even requested, at need, to provide in some wise for sustenance as well as for defence; and secure, if it might be,—(and it might, I think, even the *rather* be),—purity of bodily, as well as of spiritual, aliment? Why, having made many roads for the passage of armies, may they not make a few for the conveyance of food; and after organizing, with applause, various schemes of theological instruction for the Public, organize, moreover, some methods of bodily nourishment for them? Or is the soul so much less trustworthy in its instincts than the stomach, that legislation is necessary for the one, but inapplicable to the other?

APPENDIX V.—(p. 90.)

I DEBATED with myself whether to make the note on Homer longer by examining the typical meaning of the shipwreck of Ulysses, and his escape from Charybdis by help of her figtree; but as I should have had to go on to the lovely myth of Leucothea's veil, and did not care to spoil this by a hurried account of it, I left it for future exami-

nation; and, three days after the paper was published, observed that the reviewers, with their customary helpfulness, were endeavouring to throw the whole subject back into confusion by dwelling on this single (as they imagined) oversight. I omitted also a note on the sense of the word λυγρὸν, with respect to the pharmacy of Circe, and herb-fields of Helen, (compare its use in Odyssey, xvii., 473, &c.), which would farther have illustrated the nature of the Circean power. But, not to be led too far into the subtleties of these myths, observe respecting them all, that even in very simple parables, it is not always easy to attach indisputable meaning to every part of them. I recollect some years ago, throwing an assembly of learned persons who had met to delight themselves with interpretations of the parable of the prodigal son, (interpretations which had up to that moment gone very smoothly,) into mute indignation, by inadvertently asking who the *un*prodigal son was, and what was to be learned by *his* example. The leading divine of the company, Mr. Molyneux, at last explained to me that the unprodigal son was a lay figure, put in for dramatic effect, to make the story prettier, and that no note was to be taken of him. Without, however, admitting that Homer put in the last escape of Ulysses merely to make his story prettier, this is nevertheless true of all Greek myths, that they have many opposite lights and shades; they are as changeful as opal, and like opal, usually have one colour by reflected, and another by transmitted light. But they are true jewels for all that, and full of noble enchantment for those who can use them; for those who cannot, I am content to repeat the words I wrote four years ago, in the appendix to the *Two Paths*—

"The entire purpose of a great thinker may be difficult to fathom, and we may be over and over again more or less mistaken in guessing at his meaning; but the real, profound, nay, quite bottomless and unredeemable mistake, is the fool's thought, that he had *no* meaning.'

APPENDIX VI.—(p. 104.)

THE derivation of words is like that of rivers: there is one real source, usually small, unlikely, and difficult to find, far up among the hills; then, as the word flows on and comes into service, it takes in the force of other words from other sources, and becomes quite another word—often much more than one word, after the junction—a word as it were of many waters, sometimes both sweet and bitter. Thus the whole force of our English "charity" depends on the guttural in "charis" getting confused with the c of the Latin "carus;" thenceforward throughout the middle ages, the two ideas ran on together, and both got confused with St. Paul's ἀγάπη, which expresses a different idea in all sorts of ways; our "charity" having not only brought in the entirely foreign sense of almsgiving, but lost the essential sense of contentment, and lost much more in getting too far away from the "charis" of the final Gospel benedictions. For truly it is fine Christianity we have come to, which, professing to expect the perpetual grace or charity of its Founder, has not itself grace or charity enough to hinder it from overreaching its friends in sixpenny bargains; and which, supplicating evening and morning the forgiveness of its own debts, goes forth at noon to take its fellow-servants by the throat, saying,—not merely "Pay me that thou owest," but "Pay me that thou owest me *not*."

It is true that we sometimes wear Ophelia's rue with a difference, and call it "Herb o' grace o' Sundays," taking consolation out of the offertory with—"Look, what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again." Comfortable words indeed, and good to set against the old royalty of Largesse—

> Whose moste joie was, I wis,
> When that she gave, and said, "Have this."

I am glad to end, for this time, with these lovely words of Chau-

cer. We have heard only too much lately of "Indiscriminate cha rity," with implied reproval, not of the Indiscrimination merely, but of the Charity also. We have partly succeeded in enforcing on the minds of the poor the idea that it is disgraceful to receive; and are likely, without much difficulty, to succeed in persuading not a few of the rich that it is disgraceful to give. But the political economy of a great state makes both giving and receiving graceful; and the political economy of true religion interprets the saying that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," not as the promise of reward in another life for mortified selfishness in this, but as pledge of bestowal upon us of that sweet and better nature, which does not mortify itself in giving.]

Brantwood, Coniston,
5th October, 1871.

THE END.

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